

THE  
HOLY GRAIL  
BY  
JAMES A.B. SCHERER



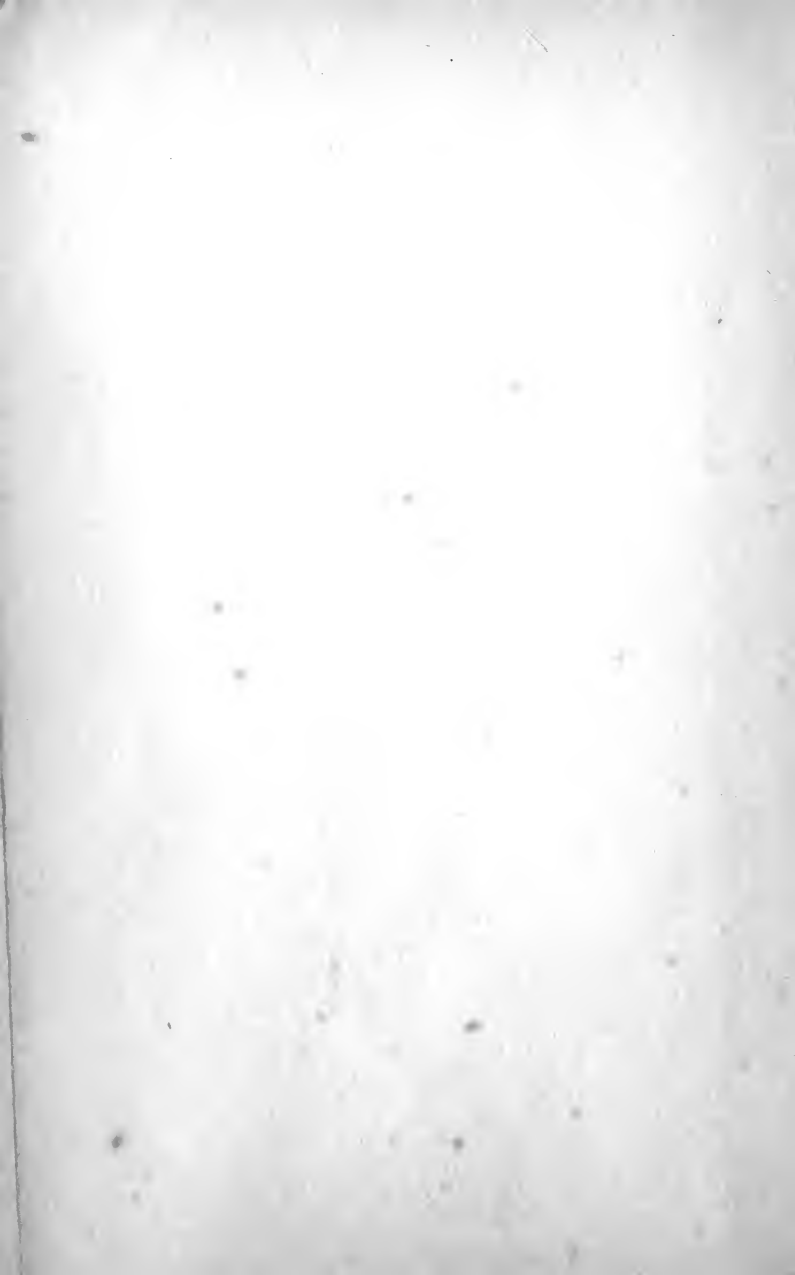
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# THE HOLY GRAIL

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SIR GALAHAD'S QUEST OF THE GRAIL

"My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure."

—TENNYSON, "Sir Galahad."

# THE HOLY GRAIL

SIX KINDRED ADDRESSES  
AND ESSAYS

BY

JAMES A. B. SCHERER

President of Newberry College

Author of "Four Princes," "Young Japan," etc.



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DEDICATED TO  
THE CHARLESTONIANS  
IN TOKEN OF  
LASTING FRIENDSHIP



## PREFACE

I INTEND the Holy Grail to be the binding theme that unites this sheaf of essays and addresses. The first bears that especial title, but the quest of the Grail is no less the real motive of the five other chapters in this book. For example, no men since the days of Galahad and Percivale have more utterly lost themselves in the knightly quest than those two Southern poets whose early death deprived the world of mystical rich music, but brought them their vision at last. The Crusaders were knights of the Grail. "Liberty and law" shows the present need of lance and spear, while the final chapter hints of a Golden Age to come. I pray that my

little book may somehow hearten some of those who wander, and point them straightwise towards The Gleam. This is its single aim.

JAMES A. B. SCHERER.

NEWBERRY COLLEGE, S. C.

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## THE HOLY GRAIL



# THE HOLY GRAIL\*

## A TRIBUTE AND AN APPEAL

SOME one asked a child on a door-step,  
“Is your father at home?” The house  
was that of a village physician.

“No; he is away,” answered the child.

“Can you tell me where I can find  
him?”

“No; but he is somewhere, where  
somebody is either sick or hurt; he is  
helping somewhere.”

And the caller went away with a beau-  
tiful sermon in his heart. “Helping  
somewhere!”

There is beauty in a life of service.

It solves one of the great problems that  
weigh upon the minds of men in these

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\* Delivered before the Medical College of  
South Carolina.

days—the problem of inequality. Here are the rich, there are the poor; here are the weak, there are the strong. The high and the lowly, the crushed and those who crush them, the maimed and wan against the ruddy and the glad; what a vast riddle lies in this universal fact of human inequality! The saddest feature of it is that the weak themselves so keenly realize their weakness. They have not even that poor bliss which ignorance is said to bring. They are consciously unequal. On the other hand, never before has this fact of inequality been so fully realized by the brothers of the weak. “Never before have men felt the sorrows and hardships of their fellow men so widely, so keenly, so constantly, as to-day.”

The solution is in service. In a perfectly equal world service would be manifestly impossible. It implies inequalities. And were service impossible, the noblest

fruitfulness of the human soul, the highest attainment of human character, would perforce be unachieved. To each is given his individual talent, which is to be spent in service for the common weal. Brain and brawn, music and money, letters, mechanics, sciences and arts—there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, the spirit of service, should animate all, and so achieve at once the common weal and the highest individual development. “He that would be chief among you, let him be as one that doth serve.” Herein is happiness, herein is health and hope. If vice be the shadow of idleness, service is ir-radiant of virtue. “Ich dien” is indeed a princely motto; and true princes in the realm of service are the men who go forth night and day, in storm and sunshine, through evil and through good report, into mansions and hovels, wherever some one is sick or hurt, helping somewhere;

serving, always serving. Carlyle writes of the hero as prophet, the hero as poet, the hero as priest, as man of letters, as king. He did not need to write a chapter on the hero as a healer, since such a chapter is written in every human heart where burns the faintest spark of gratitude for such as serve. Then,

Health to the art whose glory is to give  
The crowning boon that makes it life to live!

I said that service is irradiant, but the statement must be qualified. Service does not always bless either the servant or the served. Serve we must; yet there are those who serve faithfully, but cheerlessly. There are physicians, for example, who bring skill and constancy and good medicines and deep learning into the sick-room, but they do not bring warmth, nor are their own hearts warm. On the other hand, there is the immoral character of William McClure,

whose home is not only beside the bonnie brier bush, but also beneath Southern palmettos. The one man may be perfect; but even so, he is painfully perfect—precise, cool, chilling, mechanical. He is “the doctor”—Dr. Fell. We may stand in awe of him, but we do not love him; we rather have that shuddering fear of him which love casts out. See him, this fell physician, with his saw-like face and his saw-like voice and his surgeon’s saw, unsheathed, forever taking conspicuously the place of his knightly sword. How he loves to brandish his saw, unmindful of shrinking nerves! Harsh, skilful, saw-like Dr. Fell!

I do not like thee, Dr. Fell,  
 The reason why I cannot tell;  
 But this I know, I know full well:  
 I do not like thee, Dr. Fell.

The other man (may his tribe increase)  
 is “our friend, Dr. McClure.” How

proud we are to call him that! Warm-hearted, cheery, wholesome Dr. McClure! The one man may help the body, but the other helps the body and the soul, because he has a soul himself. It is the difference between the music of a street organ and the music of a woman's voice. Service is always music. But it may be mechanical, or it may be mellow with light.

I despair of making my meaning clear without recourse to a legend.\*

This legend is the simplest form of the story known as Percivale, or the Holy Grail. Simple as it is, this story has had a deeper influence upon literature than any other legend in the world. Familiar to the people of Western Britain before their conversion to Christianity, it was

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\* Besides Tennyson and Malory, I am indebted in this study of the Grail chiefly to the excellent essays by George McLean Harper and Ferris Greenslet—S.

seized upon by the religious romancers of the twelfth century and transformed into a Christian legend. Since that time it has formed the theme for the greatest of epic poems, whether in French, Welsh, English, German, Icelandic, or Flemish. Its influence was profound, showing itself especially in spiritualizing the Arthurian narratives, which had previously been of a worldly, and even sensual, character. During the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries it was the mission of the legend of the Holy Grail to fill the strong, deep current of Arthurian romance with purity and light. "Then the Renaissance, which was springing to so many fields of thought, fell like a polar night on these shining floods of fair mediæval story. The legend of the Holy Grail, which had leaped down in tiny rivulets from the high antiquity of so many races, and had cleansed and beautified the literatures of

so many tongues—this purifying stream lay frozen throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Suddenly, in our own time, it has been irradiated and warmed to life again and to the old genial motion.”

But what is the legend? Lately one has retold it in the beauty of its simplest form:

They say that a banished queen, widow of a king slain in combat, dwelt in the wild-wood with her little son. His childhood was spent in companionship with the birds of the forest. He loved them and understood their language. One day he met several knights in a green glade and was fascinated by the splendor of their arms and by what they told him of their wandering life. Following their example, he, too, set forth to conquer the world. He soon reached a bewitched castle, upon which some dreadful woe

had fallen. A wounded man, called the Fisher King, lay there speechless, but supplicating relief with great sorrowful eyes. At regular intervals there is borne before this sufferer a sacred vessel, bathed in a holy light, at sight of which the king and his attendants look expectantly towards the simple Percivale. But he has been taught pridefully never to ask questions, and so he leaves the castle to its fate. If he had only had sufficient interest in this mystery to speak of it, the Fisher King would have been healed. Percivale now goes forth to many more adventures, but is ever haunted by pity for the king and regret of his own forbearance. At length he learns from a hermit that the sacred vessel was the Holy Grail, and devotes himself henceforth to searching for the castle in hopes of repairing his fault. After many years he finds it again, but now the spell is not so

easily unbound. He must first weld together the parts of a broken sword. When this is finally done, and when he asks the searching duplex question, "What ails thee, O King? And what mean these wondrous things?"—then the Fisher King recovers, hailing Percivale as his deliverer and the chief defender of the Grail.

But what is the significance of this legend of the Holy Grail? Briefly, this seems to me to be its meaning: To men who, getting and spending, are laying waste their powers; in days when the world is too much with us, every way, this fertile bit of folk-lore comes to us as a reminder of spiritual needs and privileges. It comes as a warning lest, in our daily dealings with the material world, we forget the wonders of the ideal land. To the caretakers of the body it comes as a warning lest, in dealing with

the *materia medica*, they lose sight of the truth that "in the cloud of the human soul there is a fire stronger than the lightning and a grace more precious than the rain." Serve we must. That which ennobles service is a belief in the ideal and the spiritual.

My message, then, is an appeal for the ideal against the material and gross. My voice is a voice crying against the threatening triumph of materialism over the spiritual. Service may be hard and cold, or it may be full of all sweetness and light, both for ourselves and for others. The light that transforms it, making it a blessing to oneself and a strong uplifting force to other men, is the light which Tennyson, the aged, called *The Gleam*.

This great man's theory of service was altogether a wholesome and practical theory. He had no patience with the silly folk who will only dream and drone. He

taught that no man, for the simple sake of seeing visions, many wander from the allotted field before his work be done; that even the king is but the hind to whom a space of land is given to plough. He did not let himself fall into that pretty net of a lazy and sentimental philosophy whose motto is: Be, not Do. He taught that none can nobly be who will not faithfully do. But he saw, too, that service may be dark and hard, missing its highest end, both for the servant and the served. Therefore, as this gray magician, who so long had enchanted the world with his music, was about to turn again home, he shouted the secret of his noble life of service to all young mariners ready to launch out into the deep.

O young Mariner,  
You from the haven  
Under the sea-cliff,  
You that are watching  
The gray Magician

With eyes of wonder,  
I am Merlin,  
And I am dying,  
I am Merlin  
Who follow The Gleam . . .  
Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight!  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven  
Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel,  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow The Gleam.

That is my message—follow The Gleam! Now, “ere it vanishes over the margin, after it, follow it, follow The Gleam!”

Let me show you the remarkable adaptation of the Percivale legend to inculcate this message. I have cited the story of the Grail in its simplest form, precisely as

it stands written in ancient romances, without the slightest addition or alteration. Yet when we come to apply it to this present occasion, and to our own needs, it is hard to believe that it has not been purposely adjusted, so perfectly does it fit them.

Here is the lad, Percivale. His childhood has been spent in all simplicity and purity. One day he heeds the voices of the knights of healing, and resolves to go out into the world in their noble company. It is not far to the doomed castle, whereon some dreadful woe seems to have fallen. You will not be long in your professions before there comes an oppressive sense of the misery that fills the world. Here he lies, the Fisher King. Only a poor fisherman, perhaps—toilsome, suffering, helpless, conscious of his weakness and his wounds; yet still a king! Here he lies, patient, and supplicating relief,

with great dumb imploring eyes. Will you make the mistake of the other Percivale? Shall this dumb and wounded Fisher King see in our eyes no interest in the sacred and the spiritual? If you ask for the body's sake, "What ails thee?" will you not also show interest in the "wondrous things" of the soul? As the visions of the higher life pass ever and anon before his apprehension now quickened by suffering, shall he discern from sympathetic touch and glance that these things are gloriously true, or shall a hard, mechanical materialism chill these holy visions of his into a haunting nightmare? Be sure that unless an interest and a faith in the spiritual and the unseen illumine your service to the Fisher King, you will go forth and leave him still wounded, whereas you might have healed and freed him. Then, years afterwards, you may seek remorsefully to repair your fault and

crime against the Fisher King. But now, alas! the spell is not so easily unbound; one must first weld together the parts of a broken sword. Ah, keen, unbroken sword of knightly and believing youth! Wield it, and it grows the stronger and the brighter. Leave it unused, and it weakens, rusts, breaks.

There is no sadder proof of this than in the experience of the great scientist, Charles Darwin. One of his letters contains a remarkable confession, strange and pathetic. "In one respect," he says, "my mind has changed during the last twenty or thirty years. Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, gave me great pleasure, and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare. I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and

music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music.

Music generally sets me thinking too energetically on what I have been at work on, instead of giving me pleasure. I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me the exquisite delight which it once did. My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone on which the higher tastes depend I cannot conceive. If I had to live my life again I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for, perhaps, the part of my brain now atrophied would thus

have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature."

I will venture to say that the profession into which you go will expose you to the same danger that eventually so saddened this great and honest scientist. In dealing with mere facts there is always a tendency to forget truth. Phenomena conceal realities. You will be busied incessantly with drugs and bones and nerves and tissues. Thinking so much about the body, you may be tempted to forget the soul. It will be easy to develop the purely intellectual faculties at the expense of those powers on which the very highest tastes and pleasures depend. Moreover, you and I are born into an age of materialism; an age when it is hard to main-

tain the vision of the spiritual. The malaria of materialism forms a mist, a fog, wherein the spirit moves, heavy and bewildered. "Things that are near loom larger in the mist. Things that are far are lost to view." "Men are confused, hesitating, questioning, despondent, in regard to all that lies beyond the reach of the senses." Materialism is the only religion that some will hear of; teaching that the first cause is some blind pulp,—the final cause, dust and ashes. The genesis of man, they tell us, is through the earthworm, who also shall devour him. It is, I say, a materialistic age, and the mist of doubt will tend to blind you to the sight of things that are far, but real; especially since your sight will perforce be so closely and constantly directed towards the things that are near by.

But that is not all. The most of you will belong to one of those four profes-

sions that get the closest views of human nature. The lawyer, the editor, the minister and the physician see things that other men barely suspect. The physician, I believe, sees, most of all, the weaknesses of humanity, with its innumerable faults and foibles. You will feel the sting of ingratitude; you may feel the sting of poverty. You may even feel the double sting of an undeserved poverty, begotten of the ingratitude of those for whom you labor. All of these things, the scientific character of your profession, the intimate knowledge that it gives of the dark and seamy side of life, and the character of the age in which we live, will tend strongly, as it seems to me, to make you strangers to "the wonders of the ideal land" whereof Timrod sings.

Learn a lesson from Timrod. If ever a high and beautiful spirit was tempted to lose faith in the ideal and the spiritual,

that temptation came to Henry Timrod. The maturer years of his life form a sickening record of one long wrestling with cruelty, famine, and disease. Concerning his sweet minstrelsy, which was infinitely dear to him, hunger made him once write to his friend, Paul Hayne, that he would "consign every line of it to eternal oblivion for one hundred dollars in hand." It was an awful fight between Beauty and the Beast, but the beauty of his spirit survived. Willing to destroy all his poetry for a little bread and bacon, the poetry of life yet remained priceless and triumphant with him. Wet with his tears and blood he has left us a song that glows with the dazzling fire of an inextinguishable hope and faith. In the midst of his wrestling with the horrible realities of his sad life, as he realized the danger which beset him of losing all that makes life worth while, he cried out in a very agony of earnestness:

Dear God! if that I may not keep through life

My trust, my truth,  
And that I must, in yonder endless strife,  
Lose faith with youth;

If the same toil which indurates the hand

Must steel the heart,  
Till in the wonders of the ideal land  
It have no part;

Oh, take me hence! I would no longer stay

Beneath the sky;  
Give me to chant one pure and deathless lay,  
And let me die!\*

In speaking of Timrod, my thought naturally recurs to his great master, Tennyson, and I recall his striking testimony to the reality of the things unseen, when in conversation he once said: "There are moments when the flesh is nothing to me, when I feel and know the flesh to be the vision, God and the spiritual the only real and true. Depend upon it, the spir-

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\* "Youth and Manhood."

itual is the real; it belongs to one more than the hand and the foot. You may tell me that my hand and foot are only imaginary symbols of my existence. I could believe you, but you never, never can convince me that the I is not an eternal reality, and that the spiritual is not the true and real part of me." His son adds that he spoke these words with such passionate earnestness that a solemn stillness fell on them all as he left the room.

It is little wonder that this great man, with his prophet's vision of the spiritual as the truly real, should be the foremost of all the poets, in many tongues and centuries, who have dealt with the glorious story of the Grail. This theme appealed to him, as he himself has told us, because it gave such rich opportunity to express his "strong feeling as to the reality of the Unseen." First, it is Percivale's sister, a nun, who sees the vision.

. . . "O my brother Percivale," she said,  
"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:  
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound  
As of a silver horn from o'er the hills  
Blown, and I thought, 'It is not Arthur's use  
To hunt by moonlight;' and the slender sound,  
As from a distance beyond distance grew,  
Coming upon me—O never harp nor horn,  
Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with  
hand,  
Was like that music as it came; and then  
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,  
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,  
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,  
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed  
With rosy colors leaping on the wall;  
And then the music faded, and the Grail  
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls  
The rosy quiverings died into the night."

Next the wonderful vision comes veiled  
to all the knights of Arthur, as they sit  
feasting in their great hall at the Table  
Round.

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,  
And all at once, as there we sat, we heard

And rending, and a blast, and overhead  
 Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.  
 And in the blast there smote along the hall  
 A beam of light seven times more clear than day:  
 And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail  
 All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,  
 And none might see who bare it, and it past.

Then it is the pure Galahad who describes to Percivale his success in the noble quest.

. . . I, Galahad, saw the Grail, . . .  
 . . . and never yet  
 Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,  
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side, nor come  
 Cover'd, but moving with me night and day,  
 Fainter by day, but always in the night  
 Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd marsh  
 Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top  
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below  
 Blood-red. And in the strength of this I rode,  
 Shattering all evil customs everywhere.

Then Percivale himself, drawn by the power of Galahad, attains the unveiled vision. He sees Galahad clad "in silver-

shining armor starry-clear," embarked at night upon the stormy sea. As the thunders roar, the heavens open with blaze of lightning, and reveal to the watcher on the shore Sir Galahad asail.

And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung  
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,  
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.  
Then in a moment when they blazed again  
Opening, I saw the least of little stars  
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star  
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires  
And gateways in a glory like one pearl—  
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—  
Strike from the sea; and from the star there shot  
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there  
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail.

The vision, too, was granted to the honest, simple-minded Bors, who scarce had prayed or asked it for himself, so humble was he; yet, nevertheless, one night before his sight "the sweet Grail glided and past, and close upon it pealed a shrap, quick thunder."

Then at last the veiled vision of the sin-tormented Lancelot! Cursed with an overpowering unholy love, he rode madly on the quest, hoping that could he but touch or see the Holy Grail his sin and spirit might be plucked asunder. At length, cast ashore from a mad and perilous voyage, he found an enchanted castle, lion-guarded. Up between the lions he pressed in the moonlit night—up a thousand steps, panting, towards where, in the topmost tower to the eastward, a sweet voice sang clear and high as a lark.

. . . As in a dream I seem'd to climb  
For ever; at the last I reach'd a door;  
A light was in the crannies, and I heard,  
"Glory and joy and honor to our Lord,  
And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."  
Then in my madness I essay'd the door;  
It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a heat  
As from a seventimes-heated furnace, I,  
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,  
With such a fierceness that I swoon'd away—  
O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,

All pall'd in crimson samite, and around  
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings and eyes.  
And but for all my madness and my sin,  
And then my swooning, I had sworn I saw  
That which I saw ; but what I saw was veil'd  
And cover'd ; and this Quest was not for me.

Alas, for the blinding power of a wilful sin ! And yet he saw it, although veiled. Not alone the retired and holy nun had this glorious vision ; not alone the maiden Sir Galahad and the wandering Percivale, but also the simple-minded Bors and the wrestling Lancelot. Be sure that the Quest is for all who are willing to seek it.

O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven  
Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel,  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow The Gleam.

There is no way by which this faith in the good, the true and the beautiful may better be kept living and warm than by the way of literature. Of course I do not speak of the literature that belongs especially to professions. Chaucer's "doctour of phisik" was thoroughly grounded in that.

Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,  
And Deyscorides, and eek Rufus;  
Olde Ypocras, Haly, and Galyen;  
Serapion, Razis, and Avycen;  
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;  
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn,

so that "in al this world ne was ther noon him lyk, to spek of phisik and of surgerye." And yet, despite this expert technical knowledge, he had fallen deep into this very error, against which the great voices all sound warning. We know this, because

He kepte that he wan in pestilence.  
For gold in phisik is a cordial;  
Therefore he loved gold in special.

Nay, I do not mean the technical literature of your professions. I speak rather of what is sometimes called, with a sneer, "mere *belles lettres*." If, in the wonders of the ideal land, you are to have a part, you dare not slight the pleasant paths of the great English classics. Remember Darwin's regret that he had not read some poetry at least once every week, and so supplied a tonic to prevent, in the pursuit of a purely scientific profession, the atrophy of those faculties upon which the higher tastes depend. As a very discerning philosopher has put it, to acquire a love for the best poetry, and a just understanding of it, is the chief end of the study of literature. "For it is by means of poetry that the imagination is quickened, nurtured, and invigorated, and it is

only through the exercise of the imagination that a man can live a life that is in a true sense worth living. For it is the imagination which lifts him from the petty, transient, and physical interests that engross the greater part of his time and thoughts in self-regarding pursuits, to the large, permanent, and spiritual interests that ennoble his nature, and transform him from a solitary individual into a member of the brotherhood of the human race." \*

Do not say that you have no time for letters; the mind to read finds the time to read. And so the danger is not that you will not find the time, but that you may, like Darwin, lose the mind for it. Some of our great English-speaking physicians, from Sir Thomas Browne to Oliver Wendell Holmes and Weir Mitchell, have

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\* Charles Eliot Norton.

proved that there is no necessary disparity between medicine and letters.

As a second influence in maintaining a clear vision of The Gleam, of the spiritual realities of life, I would name chivalry. By chivalry I mean nothing else than a steadfast belief in the purity and nobility of womanhood. I am selfish in this advice. What I mean is this: There is no danger that woman will ever lose the vision of the things unseen; her perception is keener than ours, her spiritual horizon wider; now, by a steadfast belief in her and her ideals, we can have our own kept true through her sweet aid. It is not without a profound significance that the maiden nun belted Sir Galahad as he set forth on his quest for the Holy Grail. Shearing away clean from her forehead all her wealth of hair, out of this she plaited broad and long a strong sword-belt.

. . . and wove with silver thread  
And crimson in the belt a strange device,  
A crimson grail within a silver beam;  
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on  
him,  
Saying, "My knight, my love, my knight of  
heaven,  
O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,  
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.  
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,  
And break thro' all, till one will crown thee  
king  
Far in the spiritual city;" and as she spake  
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes  
Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind  
On him, and he believed in her belief.

Chivalry, literature, and religious faith  
—these three are the prismatic elements  
of the deathless gleam of the Holy Grail.  
He who holds to these finds his quest;  
and the greatest of these is faith. Chau-  
cer says of his "doctour" that "his studie  
was but litel on the Bible." After that  
illuminating bit of information we cannot

wonder that he "loved gold in special" and "kepte that he wan in pestilence." For in the end it is religious faith that lies at the root of all true charity and nobility of life. I have spoken of chivalry; I remind you that the source of chivalry was the Crusades, and the Crusades were nothing but religious wars. I have spoken of literature; I remind you of that Book which is the permeating force of all our truest literature, the Book that Walter Scott, on his death-bed, called the only book. I have spoken of Tennyson; I recall an extract from Queen Victoria's private journal, under date of August 7, 1883, where she is describing a visit which the great poet had just paid her. "He talked of the many friends he had lost and what it would be if he did not feel and know that there was another world, where there would be no partings; and then he spoke with horror of the unbelievers and philosophers who would make you believe

that there was no other world, no immortality, who tried to explain all away in a miserable manner." I spoke of Timrod; his poems glow with religious faith. So with Sir Thomas Browne and Holmes and all the great men mentioned in this talk about the Holy Grail. What is the Holy Grail itself? A religious cup bathed in spiritual light. The spiritual and the ideal cannot exist apart from the religious.

This truth is beautifully told by one of the minnesingers, who dealt with the legend of the Holy Grail. He paints the lad, Percivale, at his mother's side, before he had set forth to journey towards the doomed castle in the company of knights. He had lived in the wild-wood, innocent and joyous, loving the birds and all things God hath made. One day, in pain for the wounded birds, he hears his mother speak the great Name of the Creator of all, and, looking up into her face, he asks

the mighty question, "O mother, what is God?" Her answer is one of deep beauty and tenderness:

My son, in solemn truth I say,  
He is far brighter than the day,  
Though once His countenance did change  
Into the face of man.  
O son of mine, give wisely heed,  
And call on Him in time of need,  
Whose faithfulness has never failed  
Since first the world began.

Forget not this lesson of the mother as you go out into the high and holy knight-hood of service; let not faith falter. Be sure that there is a God. We discern His likeness brightening the page of history, with the illumination of a single divine purpose, governing and directing all; that "divinity which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." There is a God. We see Him in the blue vault of the sky, we feel Him in the touch of a mother's hand, in the kiss of a child's pure

lips. We hear Him in the still, small voice  
that whispers to the heart, Thou shalt, or  
Thou shalt not.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with  
spirit can meet—

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than  
hands and feet.

In Him will I believe. In the good, the  
beautiful and the true will I believe. In  
the wonders of the ideal land I will seek  
to hold my part. Follow The Gleam!  
Now, ere it vanishes over the margin;  
now, in our strong youth, let us after it,  
follow it—the vision of a sacred vessel  
bathed with light, the vision of the Holy  
Grail, which, if you hold it ever in sight,  
will bless and lift your lives and, through  
you, unbind and heal the wounded Fisher  
King.

And now, fair Sirs, your voices: who will gird  
His belt for travel in the perilous ways?  
This thing must be fulfilled: in vain our land

Of noble name, high deed, and famous men,  
Vain the proud homage of our thrall the sea,  
If we be shorn of God ;—ah, loathsome shame !  
To hurl in battle for the pride of arms ;  
To ride in native tourney, foreign war ;  
To count the stars ; to ponder pictured runes,  
And grasp great knowledge, as the demons do,—  
If we be shorn of God ;—we must assay  
The myth and meaning of this marvellous bowl ;  
It shall be sought and found.\*

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\* Robert Stephen Hawker.

HENRY TIMROD



# HENRY TIMROD

## A CAROLINA POET

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S pregnant criticism of America, that it needs ruins, hardly applies to old Charleston, which was a city when New York was a town. The place wears that quiet dignity which comes only with the heaping years. It has the calm culture whereof Arnold was so fond, but whose price is ruins. Its gray hairs are its glory-crown.

From the ocean it is Wilhelm Müller's sunken city, seeming to rise from the sea. Ancient spires gleam white in the Southern sun, under a turquoise sky. Nearing, you see no vulgar showiness of piled-up brownstone, but the simple elegance of snowy, slender columns fronting the open doors of ancient homes. It is not Amer-

ica, it is Europe; not the new world, but the old.

The churches can trace back their histories to a time when letter-heads were dated 16— instead of 19—. One of them is a Huguenot church, founded by refugees, and still worshipping with its unchanged historic liturgy. The St. Cecilia Society, oldest social organization in America, was founded in 1761, and the Charleston Library dates from 1748. There is a Hibernian Society, organized in 1701; one of Scotchmen, founded 1729; and a "German Friendly Society," organized in 1766.

The early roll of this German Friendly Society bears the name of Henry Timrod (grandfather of his great namesake), who became a member in 1772. William, his only son, was born of a Scotch mother, thus uniting those two diverse elements which Professor Morley likes to

trace in English literature,—Teutonic and Keltic. At the age of eleven William's love of books literally bound him to a bookbinder, whom he startled one day in Nullification times with an outburst of patriotic poetry. While writing good verse, the bookbinder, William Timrod, never became more than a man of letters, bequeathing the bud of his poetic genius to a gentle son, in whom it blossomed into fairest and fullest flower, his immortelle.

Henry Timrod was born in the city of Charleston, South Carolina, in the year 1829. A studious schoolboy, he had as desk-mate and always warmest friend, Paul Hamilton Hayne, who prepared for the second edition of Timrod's poems (in 1873) a memoir to which the present writer is indebted.\* "Harry" was a sen-

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\* The edition has long been out of print, and rare. A third appeared in 1899, brought out by

sitive, passionate lad, shy save with intimate friends. Poetic tastes appeared early, the natural fruitage of his temperament. His warm delight in nature, inherited doubtless from his beautiful English mother, gave him that power which marks the poet from his fellows: the power to interpret rather than merely describe. He wrote verses when but a child, and later, while a student at the University of Georgia, pretty love-fancies appeared from his pen in the *Charleston News*. But ill health and poverty brought him away from school an undergraduate. For a while he studied law, then set about preparing to be a teacher. Yet ever while fighting the wolf, his whole heart yearned towards poetry. Hayne draws a graphic picture of him reciting Wordsworth's

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Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., for the Timrod Memorial Association.

“Intimations,” his favorite poem: “Short of stature, but broad-chested, and compactly formed, with his superb head well set upon shoulders erect, and thrown back in haughty grace—his gray eyes flashing, and his swarthy face one glow of intense emotion—it was impossible to listen to him without catching some spark of his fiery enthusiasm.”

Another literary friend of Timrod's was Gilmore Simms. The young poet, during his ten years of school-teaching in the “up-country,” was frequently one of the cultured coterie whom Simms, “like a literary Nestor, gathered about him in his hospitable home.” Timrod wrote at this time for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, under the name of “Aglaüs,” and for a short-lived journal edited by Hayne, known as *Russell's Magazine*. This magazine contains essays which show his the-

ories of art.\* In defending the sonnet as a form of expression, he ridicules those who, regarding poetry as the "outgushing of a present emotion, cannot conceive how the poet, carried on by the 'divine afflatus,' should always contrive to rein in his Pegasus at a certain goal." Then he adds, with rare discrimination and common-sense: "A distinction must be made between the moment when the great thought first breaks upon the mind,

'Leaving in the brain  
A rocking and a ringing,'

and the hour of patient, elaborate execution. It is in the conception only that the poet is *vates*: in the labor of putting that conception into words, he is simply the artist."

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\* See his "Theory of Poetry," published in *The Atlantic Monthly* (September, 1905) as this book goes to press.

His own work gives fine illustration to this union between passion and patience, for he was both seer and artist. As a characteristic specimen of his style, we may take these verses addressed to a cotton boll :

While I recline  
At ease beneath  
This immemorial pine,  
Small sphere !  
(By dusky fingers brought this morning here  
And shown with boastful smiles),  
I turn thy cloven sheath,  
Through which the soft white fibres peer,  
That, with their gossamer bands,  
Unite, like love, the sea-divided lands,  
And slowly, thread by thread,  
Draw forth the folded strands,  
Than which the trembling line,  
By whose frail help yon startled spider fled  
Down the tall spear-grass from his swinging bed  
Is scarce more fine ;  
And as the tangled skein  
Unravels in my hands,  
Betwixt me and the noonday light,

A veil seems lifted, and for miles and miles  
The landscape broadens on my sight,  
As, in the little boll, there lurked a spell  
Like that which, in the ocean shell,  
With mystic sound,  
Breaks down the narrow walls that hem us round,  
And turns some city lane  
Into the restless main,  
With all his capes and isles!

An elaborate metrical exposition of Timrod's theories of art is found in his "Vision of Poesy," the longest one of the first collection of his poems, published by Ticknor & Fields in 1860. These productions won deserved praise, the critic of the *New York Tribune* finding in them "a genuine poetic instinct," with a "lively, delicate fancy, and a graceful beauty of expression."

Timrod, more than any other man, is the poet of the South—of "the generous and lonely South." His voice is her breath, her spirit gave him life, and in her

defeat he fell. For when the flash of the Charleston cannon set the South on fire, Timrod was destined, like Sidney Lanier, to be one of the eventual victims of that fearful holocaust. From the first he threw himself with all his fervid feeling into the heated struggle. War verses, sonorous with drum-beat and trumpet, rolled from his pen,—yet beneath the blare and thunder breathes always some sweet earnest prayer for peace. His was a gentle spirit. In '62 he went to the front as correspondent for the *Charleston Mercury*, but was actually made sick with the sight of strife, and so “staggered homeward, half blinded, bewildered, with a dull red mist before his eyes, and a shuddering horror at heart.” Then, in the thick of the whelming storm, he found for one swift elusive hour the sweet shelter of a comfortable home. Married in Columbia to his “Katie,” heroine of one of

the sweetest of his songs, he also found in that city what seemed an escape from the hungry wolf that had always followed at his heels. Becoming editor and part owner of a well-to-do Columbia paper, and blessed soon with a beautiful child whom he idolized, his gentle spirit was thrilled with quiet happiness. How pure and beautiful must have been the crowned love of a man who could sing thus of wooing:—

As thou talkest at the fireside,  
With the little children by—  
As thou prayest in the darkness,  
When thy God is nigh—

With a speech as chaste and gentle,  
And such meaning as become  
Ear of child, or ear of angel,  
Speak, or be thou dumb.

Woo her thus, and she shall give thee  
Of her heart the sinless whole,

All the girl within her bosom,  
And her woman's soul.\*

Alas! his babe was not yet two months old when the war-torch burnt his home, destroying utterly all his little property; leaving him beggared, only to be presently bereaved by the death of his beautiful boy. The poet's life henceforth became a tragic wrestling with famine and disease, made infinitely pathetic by the un murmuring sweetness with which he bore up to the struggle. "Little Jack Horner," he writes to Hayne, making sad sport of his misery—"Little Jack Horner, who sang for his supper, and got his plumcake, was a far more lucky minstrel than I am." Concerning this minstrelsy of his, which was unspeakably dear to him, hunger made him add: "I would consign every line of it to eternal oblivion for one hun-

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\* "The Lily Confidante."

dred dollars in hand!" Copying legal papers for "a month's supply of bread and bacon," he says: "On two occasions I wrote from ten o'clock one morning until sunrise of the next day." Yet this man, while suffering so cruelly from the effects of the war, could nevertheless interpret the message of that terrible spring of '65 in these brave and beautiful words: "She hangs once more in our blasted gardens the fragrant lamps of the jessamine; in the streets, she kindles the maple like a beacon announcing peace; and from amidst the charred and blackened ruins of once happy homes, she pours through the mouth of her favorite musician, the mocking-bird, a song of hope and joy. What is the lesson which she designs by these means to convey? It may be summed in a single sentence—forgetfulness of the past, effort in the present, and trust for the future!" When most

men would have been grinding their hearts to wormwood, he can say to his dear friend Hayne, "I am really learning, Paul, to trust in God."

In the autumn of 1867, from a last delightful visit to this brother soul of his, the young poet returned to Columbia to die. Hemorrhages befell him in the streets. Forced at length to his bed, they told him that his time had come. His surprised answer was, "And is this to be the end of all? So soon! so soon! and I have achieved so little. Do you not think I could *will* to live?"—adding, with a smile, "I might make an effort, like Mrs. Dombey, you know." His prayers were unceasing. Frequently he would fold his arms and repeat the lines,

Jesus, lover of my soul.

Tortured with thirst, which he was physically unable to quench, he mur-

mured: "I shall soon drink of the river of eternal life." Of death he said, while dying, "It appears like two tides—two tides advancing and retreating, these powers of life and death! Now the power of death recedes; but wait, it will advance again triumphant." To one who whispered, "You will soon be at rest now," he answered: "Yes; but love is sweeter than rest."

"In a dim and musky chamber," while the dawn was broadening on the lawn without, they whispered, "He is gone." Shortly before breathing his last, he said to his sister, "Do you remember that little poem of mine?" The verses whereof he spoke, written long ago, proved now to be his swan-song: \*

Somewhere on this earthly planet  
In the dust of flowers to be,

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\* "A Common Thought."

In the dewdrop, in the sunshine,  
Sleeps a solemn day for me.

\* \* \*

In a dim and musky chamber,  
I am breathing life away;  
Some one draws a curtain softly,  
And I watch the broadening day.

As it purples in the zenith,  
As it brightens on the lawn,  
There's a hush of death about me,  
And a whisper, "He is gone!"



SIDNEY LANIER



## SIDNEY LANIER

### MINSTREL AND MAN

TEN years ago I undertook to collect the various definitions set forth by modern masters as to what the *Ars Poetica* really is. I soon paused, overwhelmed. There was Poe, with his pagan contention that it is merely "the rhythmical creation of beauty." At the other extreme, there was the transcendental Browning, who calls it "a presentment of the correspondence of the universe to the Deity, of the natural to the spiritual, and of the actual to the ideal." Between these two definitions lies that vast ancient battlefield where nominalist and realist, rationalist and mystic, Aristotelian and Platonist, wage their never-ceasing war.

I shall go just far enough into this debatable ground to say that I believe the simple essential elements of all great poetry to be three: beauty and wisdom and passion. Beauty is the child of the emotions; wisdom, like Minerva, is of the mind; and passion—as I use the word—possesses the entire being.

Poe proved that he believed in his own definition of poetry by practising what he preached. Whatever else may be thought of that weird genius, it must certainly be conceded that his verse was musical, that he was in truth a creator of rhythmical beauty.

Listen:

For the moon never beams without bringing me  
dreams

Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And the stars never rise but I feel the bright  
eyes

Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my  
bride,

In the sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

That is an example of the capacity of our English speech towards the production of actual music; a fine example of the "rhythmical creation of beauty." So much must be conceded to the poetry of Poe; that he is unsurpassed in the consistency of his work with his own particular theory. And I will venture to say that no other American poet so nearly approaches him in the power of producing pure musical effects as the noble singer to whom we are listening now. Let him sing for you some stanzas of his own "Song of the Chattahoochee," and tell me whether I am not right:

Out of the hills of Habersham,  
Down the valleys of Hall,

I hurry amain to reach the plain,  
Run the rapid and leap the fall,  
Split at the rock and together again,  
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,  
And flee from folly on every side  
With a lover's pain to attain the plain  
Far from the hills of Habersham,  
Far from the valleys of Hall.

\* \* \*

High o'er the hills of Habersham,  
Veiling the valleys of Hall,  
The hickory told me manifold  
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall  
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,  
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,  
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,  
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*  
*Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,*  
*These glades in the valleys of Hall.*

\* \* \*

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,  
And oh, not the valleys of Hall  
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.  
Downward the voices of Duty call—  
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,

The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,  
 And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,  
 And the lordly main from beyond the plain  
     Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,  
     Calls through the valleys of Hall.

Sidney Lanier has, indeed, been censured for the large amount of attention he gave to the subject of the scientific construction of melodious verse. Mr. Stedman, who is perhaps our ablest living literary critic here in America, says that he had a theory which "led him to essay in language feats that only the gamut can render possible." I suppose that certain of his verses would seem to lend color to this criticism, which I have no intention of endeavoring to refute. Lanier is very well able to take care of his own theories, as is shown by his masterly essays on "Music and Poetry" and "The Science of English Verse." No view of him can be intelligently complete which does not

take cognizance of the fact that music and poetry were so bound together in his nature as to form the wedded whole of his inner spirit in an unbroken and indivisible unison; music, in the phrase of Richard Wagner, being the mate of her liege lord, poetry. So we find his most intimate biographers declaring of Lanier that from his youth he was equally dominated by these two splendid geniuses, music and poetry, which were really one to him; although we hear him actually exalting the wife above her husband in that naïve letter to his friend Paul Hayne:

“Are you, by the way, a musician? Strange that I have never before asked this question—when so much of my own life consists of music. I don’t know that I’ve ever told you that whatever turn I have for art is purely musical; poetry being, with me, a mere tangent into which I shoot sometimes.”

I cannot forbear to quote here the eloquent language of Asger Hamerik, for six years his director in the Peabody Symphony Orchestra of Baltimore:

“To him as a child in his cradle music was given; the heavenly gift to feel and to express himself in tones. His human nature was like an enchanted instrument, a magic flute, or the lyre of Apollo, needing but a breath or a touch to send its beauty out into the world. It was indeed irresistible that he should turn with those poetical feelings which transcend language to the penetrating gentleness of the flute, or the infinite passion of the violin; for there was an agreement, a spiritual correspondence, between his nature and theirs, so that they mutually absorbed and expressed each other. In his hands the flute no longer remained a mere material instrument, but was transformed into a voice that set heavenly harmonies

into vibration. Its tones developed colors, warmth, and a low sweetness of unspeakable poetry; they were not only true and pure, but poetic, allegoric as it were, suggestive of the depths and heights of being and of the delights which the earthly ear never hears and the earthly eye never sees. No doubt his firm faith in these lofty idealities gave him the power to present them to our imagination, and thus by the aid of the higher language of music to inspire others with that sense of beauty in which he constantly dwelt. . . .

“ I will never forget the impression he made on me when he played the flute-concerto of Emil Hartmann at a Peabody symphony concert in 1878; his tall, handsome, manly presence, his flute breathing noble sorrows, noble joys, the orchestra softly responding. The audience was spellbound. Such distinction, such refinement! He stood, the master, the genius.”

How could it be otherwise than that this passionate lover of music, who in his boyhood, after improvising on the violin, "would be rapt into an ecstasy which left his whole frame trembling with the exhaustion of too tense delight;" who as a man both won his bread and found his pleasure with his flute—how could it be otherwise than that his noble poetry should inevitably rock and swing to the measure of melodious beauty? I dare repeat that for pure artistic beauty of form no American poet can surpass Lanier except it be the brilliant but erratic Poe.

"Brilliant but erratic"—alas! how true the terms! Beauty is an essential of true poetry, but it is not the only essential. John Burroughs has been the last to say what others have discerned of Poe, that in his work "one's sense of artistic forms and verbal melody are alone appealed to." And Lanier himself, who was a trenchant

critic, cuts to the heart of the matter when he says: "The trouble with Poe was he did not know enough. He needed to know a good many more things in order to be a great poet."

Which brings me to say, as I promised, that the second essential element of great poetry is wisdom.

I know that the word is used in two kinds; and in both kinds do I use it now, as denoting not only mental acquisition, but also that higher power, largely moral, which is the veritable wisdom of the clear-eyed prophet. The great poet must have, in the first place, a large store of sound and scientific knowledge. "For all knowledge is food, as faith is wine, to a genius like Lanier." The age of poetry is never past; there is nothing in culture or science hostile to it. No one can read Shakespeare without overwhelming amazement for his sheer learning. That

lies really at the base of the Baconian craze, as Brandes has thoroughly shown. Unimaginative men who found it incredible that a mere poacher and playwright—as they felicitously call him—should be a veritable encyclopædia of scientific information, have had perforce to find an alias for Shakespeare, and the only contemporary who suited their necessities was Francis Bacon. Hence that lumbering logomachy of Ignatius Donnelly and his compeers. But this same amazing fulness of learning characterizes in less degree, I claim, all of the major poets. How we marvel that John Keats, a mere apothecary's clerk, as the Baconians would say, should be saturated to his finger-tips with the spirit of classic mythology, and drenched from head to heel in the innermost secrets of nature. As for Milton, he was the most learned man of his time. Browning must be read with an encyclo-

pædia for more reasons than to solve his obscurities. And surely readers of Tennyson do not need to be reminded of such touches as meet us, for example, in a phrase like that descriptive of the yew tree answering a random stroke

. . . with fruitful cloud and living smoke ;  
or of such illustrative touches as when the poet asks :

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,  
Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself when all the woods are green?

So also of Lanier it has been truly said that he was a close scientific observer, and "a tremendous student, not of music alone, but of language, of philosophy, and of science. He loved science. He was an inventor. . . . But that only made his range of poetic thought wider as his outlook became larger. The world is opening to the poet with every question the

crucible asks of the elements, with every spectrum the prism steals from a star. The old he has and all the new."

I do not care to dwell longer on this phase of our subject. Perhaps a dainty little sonnet of which I am very fond may serve to denote somehow that taste and gift for knowledge which characterizes all of Lanier's verse. It will the better appeal to Southern ears because it is indited to "The Mocking Bird:"

Superb and sole, upon a pluméd spray  
That o'er the general leafage boldly grew,  
He summ'd the woods in song; or typic drew  
The watch of hungry hawks, the lone dismay  
Of languid doves when long their lovers stray,  
And all birds' passion-plays that sprinkle dew  
At morn in brake or bosky avenue.  
Whate'er birds did or dreamed, this bird could  
say.

Then down he shot, bounced airily along  
The sward, twitched in a grasshopper, made song  
Midflight, perched, prinked, and to his art again.  
Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:

How may the death of that dull insect be  
The life of yon trim Shakspere on the tree?

I wonder whether that last bold stroke  
of Lanier's inspired another Southern  
poet, Henry Jerome Stockard, to carry  
out the Shakespeare thought in an exquisite quatrain "To a Mocking Bird:"

The name thou wearest does thee grievous  
wrong;

No mimic thou; that voice is thine alone.

The poets sing but strains of Shakespeare's song;

The birds, but notes of thine imperial own.

And now let me hasten to say that Sidney Lanier had a far larger wisdom than the wisdom of mere knowledge. He was a clear-eyed seer of the truth. It was in his nature to touch the soul of things, and then touch hearts. Carlyle was right; a poet's truest mission, like that of the musician, is to lead us to the edge of the Infinite, and let us for moments gaze into that. Herein is wisdom: to penetrate into

the inmost heart of a thing, to detect the innermost mystery of it, and then reveal it to the world in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn." That is to be a poet-prophet; and a poet-prophet was Lanier.

I seldom cross Charleston Bay when the green is on the marshes but I think of Sidney Lanier and his noble sunset hymn to "The Marshes of Glynn" down in Georgia:

. . . how ample, the marsh and the sea and the  
sky!  
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-  
high, broad in the blade,  
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a  
light or a shade,  
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,  
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal  
sea?  
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free

From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion  
of sin,  
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of  
the marshes of Glynn.

\* \* \*

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery  
sod,  
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness  
of God:  
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-  
hen flies  
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt  
the marsh and the skies:  
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in  
the sod  
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of  
God:  
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness  
within  
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of  
Glynn.

\* \* \*

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the  
waters of sleep  
Roll in on the souls of men,  
But who will reveal to our waking ken

The forms that swim and the shapes that creep  
 Under the waters of sleep?  
 And I would I could know what swimmeth below  
 when the tide comes in  
 On the length and the breadth of the marvellous  
 marshes of Glynn.

A deep sort of wisdom is this, which  
 can win truth from the treacherous  
 marsh, and make of the humble marsh-  
 hen a messenger of God. Small wonder  
 that a brother poet salutes the spirit of  
 Lanier with the rapturous cry:

The marsh burst into bloom for thee—  
 And still abloom shall ever be!  
 Its sluggish tide shall henceforth bear alway  
 A charm it did not hold until thy day.\*

Beauty he had and wisdom he had, and  
 finally he had passion—that splendid thrill  
 of quivering life that breathes through  
 words until they glow like coals that once  
 were dead. A man can be a poet without

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\* Waitman Barbe.

passion—there was Pope; and his verses may pass into proverbs, but, they will hardly take hold on hearts. Some one quizzed me the other day because I had likened Lanier to Keats. Very well. But what I mean to say again is that amid our glorious company of English poets I see two splendid quivering creatures, who, in complete attune, stand together tingling and aglow with life, life, life. They are slender, tense, delicate, if you will; but it is the tenseness and the slenderness and the delicacy of the quivering thoroughbred. They are such figures as I imagine Apollo to have been. And perhaps it may not show any very great ruggedness of taste, but I make the personal confession that while I go to Tennyson for noble music and to Browning for the stuff of which character is builded, and to Shakespeare for occasional glimpses of the Infinite; yet when I am tired, and the

tide of life runs low, there stand upon my shelves two slender volumes, Lanier and Keats, which seem to me like slender streams of refreshment from the innermost passionate heart of life. Even when the blood is most sluggish it cannot refuse the stir of that awful "Revenge of Hamish." If there is a more vibrant, dominant poem of passion in all American literature I would like to know where to find it. You know the story. The poem is too long for me to quote in full. Maclean had gone a-hunting for deer, all ambitious to slay in the sight of his wife and his child. His henchman, Hamish, had been roused breakfastless from bed to set the quarry towards the stand where the grim master, with his wife and child, was waiting. But the fleet deer escaped the hungry henchman. And Maclean, all red with wrath, had his men strip Hamish to the waist and ply him with thongs—

and "reckon no stroke if the blood follow  
not at the bite of the thong!"

So Hamish made bare, and took him his strokes;  
at the last he smiled.

We can imagine the bitterness of that smile. For, left now alone with the wife and child, while the men go back to the hunt, suddenly "he snatches the child from the mother, and clambers the crag towards the sea." The mother screams shrill and pursues him. Maclean and his clansmen hear, and strive and strain to outrun him.

But, mother, 'tis vain; but, father, 'tis vain;  
Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and  
dangles the child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run, and  
they all stand still.

And the wife prays Hamish as if he were God,  
on her knees,

Crying: "Hamish! O Hamish! but please,  
but please  
For to spare him!" and Hamish still dangles the  
child, with a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk scream,  
and a gibe, and a song,  
Cries: "So; I will spare ye the child if, in  
sight of ye all,  
Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,  
And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow not  
at the bite of the thong!"

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip  
that his tooth was red,  
Breathed short for a space, said: "Nay, but  
it never shall be!  
Let me hurl off the damnable hound in the  
sea!"  
But the wife: "Can Hamish go fish us the child  
from the sea, if dead?"

Say yea! Let them lash *me*, Hamish?"—"Nay!"  
—"Husband, the lashing will heal;  
But, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet  
bairn in his grave?  
Could ye cure me my heart with the death of  
a knave?"

Quick! Love! I will bare thee—so—kneel!”

Then Maclean ’gan slowly to kneel

With never a word, till presently downward he  
jerked to the earth.

Then the henchman—he that smote Hamish—  
would tremble and lag;

“Strike, hard!” quoth Hamish, full stern, from  
the crag;

Then he struck him, and “One!” sang Hamish,  
and danced with the child in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he counted  
each stroke with a song,

When the last stroke fell, then he moved him  
a pace down the height,

And he held forth the child in the heartaching  
sight

Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as  
repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched out  
with the thanksgiving prayer—

And there as the mother crept up with a fear-  
ful swift pace,

Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie’s face—

In a flash, fierce Hamish turned round and lifted  
the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from the  
 horrible height in the sea,  
 Shrill screeching, "Revenge!" in the wind-  
 rush; and pallid Maclean,  
 Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,  
 Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked  
 hold of dead roots of a tree—

And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his  
 back drip-dripped in the brine,  
 And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton fish as  
 he flew,  
 And the mother stared white on the waste of  
 blue,  
 And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the  
 sun began to shine.

That is passion in its crudest and most  
 biting tincture. It serves as a crude im-  
 pressive instance of the tingling and  
 throbbing vitality that transforms all of  
 Lanier's poetry, no matter what his  
 theme. What his distinctive passion was  
 will, I think, now presently appear. For  
 I intend now to speak of Lanier the man.

His life was gentle; and the elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, this was a man!

It is to the everlasting glory of the South that this man was a Southerner. To me he seems typical of the highest and finest that can come out of "the generous and lonely South" that we love so well. He was born in Macon on the 3d of February, 1842, of a good old Huguenot stock. From childhood he showed passionate attachment to music; but he had a deeper passion than music. Before he was eighteen years old he recorded in his college note-book the index to this controlling passion of his life:

"The point which I wish to settle is merely, by what method shall I ascertain what I am fit for, as preliminary to ascertaining God's will with reference to me. . . . I am more than all perplexed by this fact, that the prime inclination, that is,

natural bent (which I have checked, though) of my nature is to music; and for that I have the greatest talent . . . But I cannot bring myself to believe that I was intended for a musician, because it seems so small a business in comparison with other things which, it seems to me, I might do. Question here, What is the province of music in the economy of the world?"

From such insistent questionings he was suddenly summoned by the shrill bugle of war. For he was no less a soldier than a dreamer; in him the qualities of tenderness and strength were most harmoniously blended. As a child he had won distinction for the soldierly fashion in which he drilled a body of schoolboys in the tactics of the militia, so that the juvenile battalion was actually accorded a place in the State parades of their elders. Therefore his ear was quick to catch the

very first notes of the bugle, and he enlisted in April, 1861, in the First Regiment of Georgia Volunteers. During the course of his four years' faithful service he three times refused promotion, because he would have been separated from his younger brother, whom he dearly loved. Towards the close of the war he was captured while in charge of a vessel attempting to run the blockade; and the five months of confinement in the prison at Point Lookout sealed him for the grave. True, for fifteen long years thereafter he battled bravely against his terrible disease; but from this fatal period of his imprisonment the issue was never once in doubt. Thus, having sacrificed his health and strength upon his country's altar, when the terrible war at length was over, he took up his own sad desperate warfare, which he waged with the unfaltering courage of a Saladin until at last, in 1881,

he was compelled to show the final flag of truce, yielding up "the white flower of a blameless life" into the hands of that grim warrior who always conquers in the end. From the time of his settlement in Baltimore in 1874 his was "a story of as brave and sad a struggle as the history of genius records. On the one hand was the opportunity for study, and the full consciousness of power, and a will never subdued; and on the other a body wasting with consumption, that must be forced to task beyond its strength not merely to express the thoughts of beauty which strove for utterance, but from the necessity of providing bread for his babes." Yet he could even dare to jest about it—about the awful doom which he foresaw steadily from the first, but which he never allowed to unnerve him. He could dare to write pleasantries concerning "a certain Miss

Death," "her coquetries," and her "fan of a raven's wing."

His life in Baltimore, despite this pitiful struggle, was very sweet to Lanier. Here his musical soul could revel for the first time amid the opulent creations of the masters. "His attitude in listening was usually a bent, reverent posture, with folded arms and closed eyes—a study of profound meditation and absorption." Yet music was with him still, as it had been in his youth, but a means to a higher end. Listen to this sonnet to Beethoven:

Sovereign Master! stern and splendid power,  
That calmly dost both time and death defy;  
Lofty and lone as mountain peaks that tower,  
Leading our thoughts up to the eternal sky;  
Keeper of some divine, mysterious key,  
Raising us far above all human care,  
Unlocking awful gates of harmony  
To let Heaven's light in on the world's despair;

Smiter of solemn chords that still command  
 Echoes in souls that suffer and aspire!  
 In the great moment while we hold thy hand,  
 Baptized with pain and rapture, tears and fire,  
 God lifts our saddened foreheads from the dust—  
 The everlasting God in whom we trust.

It was during this Baltimore period that his noblest friendships ripened—save only that his devoted wife was always his closest friend. Those who would understand his passion for friendship and gain also an insight into the noble characteristics of such of his friends as Bayard Taylor and Paul H. Hayne will be fairly charmed by the carefully edited collection of “The Letters of Sidney Lanier.” And yet, while friendship was with him a passion, it was only an outer aspect of something deeper and more beautiful still.

With Sidney Lanier, as we have seen, beauty itself was a passion; but beauty was not his elemental and controlling passion. It derived its chief charm from the

fact that it was to him a synonym for something more beautiful than beauty. Wisdom was with him a passion, but not as an end in itself, rather only as a means toward the quest of his Holy Grail. The consuming passion of his life, from the heyday of youth's "high emprise" to that frosty autumn morning when his unfaltering will rendered "its supreme submission to the adored will of God"—was his passion for holiness, burning within him in a flame of the whitest lambent heat and enwrapping him with a saintly aureole of

And love of truth, and all that makes a man.  
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,  
. . . high thought, and amiable words

It may be said of him, as Liszt said of Chopin, that "his character in none of its numerous folds concealed a single movement, a single pulse, which was not dictated by the nicest sense of honor, the

most delicate appreciation of affection." He seems to me to have been a far holier man than Chopin, to whom he has at times been likened. Over and over again he was fond of uttering as the key-note of his creed of life, whether æsthetic or ethical, "Beauty is holiness, and holiness is beauty;" somewhat as Keats had said:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know!

But with Lanier holiness was an intensely practical thing, the key to his career and to his character, the one dominant passion of his life. It is perhaps the key even to his apparent defects, which, when they are examined closely, prove to be virtues. If, for example, Lanier's poetry had a "limited range," as I have heard good people declare, it is because he had learned to say:

I dare do all that may become a man;  
Who dares do more is none.

Listen to these words from his closing chapter on "The English Novel"—words to which our living novelists might well give heed:

"Wherever there is contest as between artistic and moral beauty, unless the moral side prevail, all is lost. Let any sculptor hew us out the most ravishing combination of tender curves and spheric softness that ever stood for woman; yet if the lip have a certain fulness that hints of the flesh, if the brow be insincere, if in the minutest particular the physical beauty suggests a moral ugliness, that sculptor—unless he be portraying a moral ugliness for a moral purpose—may as well give over his marble for paving-stones. Time, whose judgments are inexorably moral, will not accept his work. For indeed we may say that he who has not yet perceived how artistic beauty and moral beauty are convergent lines which run

back into a common ideal origin and who, therefore, is not afire with moral beauty, just as with artistic beauty—that he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as one fire, shine as one light, within him—he is not yet the great artist.”

He did not believe, with Flaubert, in “art for art’s sake.” He believed, with Ruskin, that “the arts can never be right themselves unless their motive is right.” So, while the crude native strength of Whitman, for example, “refreshed him like harsh salt spray,” yet Whitman’s lawlessness so repelled him that he called him “poetry’s butcher.”

—“As near as I can make it out, Whitman’s argument seems to be that, because a prairie is wide, therefore debauchery is

admirable, and because the Mississippi is long, therefore every American is God."

With Sidney Lanier, let us repeat again, as he so often loved to do, beauty was holiness and holiness was beauty. It is his chief distinction among English poets that, while you cannot call him specifically a religious poet, he, more passionately than any of his illustrious peers, loves to dwell exclusively upon the things that are pure and lovely and of good report. His beauty is the beauty of holiness and his wisdom has for its end the finding of the Infinite wisdom. He is a true knight of the Grail.

I have said that he cannot be called specifically a religious poet. He wrote only two poems that are distinctively of this character, and both of them are notable also for other qualities in an almost equal measure. The longer of the two, called "The Crystal," is the most remark-

able piece of condensed epigrammatic criticism that English literature affords. The other of these two poems is very brief, but it is wondrously beautiful, even as it is wondrously sad. He calls it "A Ballad of Trees and the Master."

Into the woods my Master went,  
Clean forspent, forspent.  
Into the woods my Master came,  
Forspent with love and shame.  
But the olives, they were not blind to Him,  
The little gray leaves were kind to Him;  
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him  
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,  
And He was well content.  
Out of the woods my Master came,  
Content with death and shame.  
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,  
From under the trees they drew Him last;  
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last  
When out of the woods He came.

The enthusiastic editor whose rare good fortune it was to "discover" this poem, has truthfully said:

"These two short verses are exquisite beyond description. They are deep and rich as the love of God; they are tender as the hushed harps of the angels that watched over Gethsemane, but forbore to help. The lines vary from five syllables to ten, with an irregularity which is masterly perfection. I should not have believed it possible to put into a poem, which cannot be surpassed for tenderness and solemnity, those extraordinary three-syllable rhymes, 'blind to Him,' 'kind to Him,' 'mind to Him' and 'woo Him last,' 'drew Him last,' 'slew Him last;' for such rhymes were usually supposed to belong to burlesque, but here they jar no sensitive nerve. They seem to draw out and prolong the sweet pain of the thought like the 'hold' which tells the singer to

linger on a tender note. The reader will not wonder that I repeated them over hundreds of times. Never since but once have I been so touched by a short poem, and that was another red-letter day when I first read Tennyson's 'Crossing the Bar.' "

I find myself embarrassed by the abundant richness of my material. I should especially like to show you, from the noble poem called "Clover," how bravely this gentle suffering poet submitted to the great browsing "Course-of-Things," actually with pæans of humble thanksgiving for the privilege of self-sacrifice! I should also like to enjoy with you his brave parable of the "Corn;" or his splendid "Sunrise" hymn of the live-oaks and the marshes, whereof the critic already quoted has declared that "no other American poet has reached the height of this one work, that no poem of its length

by Bryant or Poe or Longfellow or Lowell can compare with it for creative poetic fervor or absolute mastery of the secrets of poetic structure." \* But I am admonished that this address must have an end, and, therefore, I choose, since choose I must, one final simple song, for the reason that it voices so perfectly the aim of Sidney Lanier's existence. He calls it, significantly, "Life and Song:"

If life were caught by a clarionet,  
And a wild heart, throbbing in the reed,  
Should thrill its joy and trill its fret,  
And utter its heart in every deed,

Then would this breathing clarionet  
Type what the poet fain would be;  
For none o' the singers ever yet  
Has wholly lived his minstrelsy,

Or clearly sung his true, true thought,  
Or utterly bodied forth his life,

---

\* William Hayes Ward.

Or out of life and song has wrought  
The perfect one of man and wife;

Or lived and sung, that Life and Song  
Might each express the other's all,  
Careless if life or art were long  
Since both were one, to stand or fall;

So that the wonder struck the crowd,  
Who shouted it about the land:

*His song was only living aloud,*

*His work, a singing with his hand!*

I do not know that the wonder of Sidney Lanier's musical life has as yet "struck the crowd," or will ever do so, for crowds are hardly susceptible to any such music as that. But it seems to me that this modest knight of God, a-sighing for what seemed to him to be the unattainable, had in reality already attained and is in reality already made perfect, in that we who have caught even a few faint sweet echoes from his passionate, throbbing flute are more than ready to say for

him with absolute certitude that tribute  
for which he hungered and which would  
be any poet's most glorious epitaph :

He wholly lived his minstrelsy ;  
His song was only living aloud,  
His work, a singing with his hand.

# THE CRUSADERS



# THE CRUSADERS

## A STUDY OF THE TRANSFORMED CROSS

WITH the twelfth century, while the dawn from the Dark Ages was as yet unbroken, appeared that romantic and spirited movement of history known as the Crusades. Europe had been sleeping; not the sleep of sweet rest and pleasant dreams, but the distressed horrid slumber of nightmare. During the ninth and tenth centuries there had been no less than fifty incursions of the Northmen throughout France, which they swept as with a besom of destruction; while countless whirlwinds of the Huns devastated the whole of Europe, until the fields were actually left untilled, becoming, as in primeval times, the dwelling-place of

numberless wild beasts, which herded in human homesteads, unafraid, and, in turn, less dreaded than these human beasts of Huns. They were wandering shepherd tribes, natives of the north of Asia, and inhabiting the vast plains between Russia and China. "They had no houses. They lived in tents, in which they also stabled their horses. From being constantly on horseback their legs were crooked. They were short men, broad-shouldered, with strong muscular arms; had coarse, thick lips, straight, black, wiry hair, little, round, sloe-like eyes, yellow complexions, and sausage noses. They were filthy in their habits. Their horrible ugliness, their disgusting smell, their ferocity, the speed with which they moved, their insensibility to the gentler feelings, made the Goths, with whom they first came in contact, believe they were half demons. They ate, drank, and

slept on horseback. Their no less hideous wives and children followed them in wagons. They ate roots and raw meat. They seemed insensible to hunger, thirst, and cold." To complete the repulsiveness of this interesting picture from the pages of Baring-Gould, we need only to add that the weapons with which these frightful folk fought were the sword, the spear, the battle-axe, and, chiefly, the terrible Tartar bows. They seemed created and equipped of the arch-fiend himself.

With the coming of barbarians into the land, there was a revival of barbarism among the people. "One feels almost, in reading the foul and frightful annals, as if the ancient Pagan temper, driven into the air or trodden into the soil before the armies of the empire, had settled back densely and heavily upon Europe, and was infecting and poisoning the very

springs of spiritual life." \* This was true, not only of the people, but also of their princes, and even of the popes. It is no figure of speech to say that the "vicars of Christ" became the devotees of Satan. Not only were satanic rites actually practised at the Vatican, but the spirit of evil reigned there, the pontifical palace at one time becoming little else than "a vast school of prostitution." These are not the slander of Protestantism. Why, indeed, should not we feel as deeply as the Roman Catholics the shame of those awful days, seeing that the Church of Rome is in a sense the mother of us all? The French Catholic, Mabillon, out of many that might be cited, confesses that most of the popes of the tenth century "lived rather like monsters, or like wild beasts, than like bishops." Let us hear

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\* Storrs, "Bernard of Clairvaux."

also from Cardinal Newman on this subject. In his "Essays, Critical and Historical" he declares that "no exaggeration is possible of the demoralized state into which the Christian world, and especially the Church of Rome, had fallen in the years that followed the extinction of the Carlovingian line (A.D. 887). . . . At the close of the ninth century Pope Stephen VI. dragged the body of an obnoxious predecessor from the grave, and, after subjecting it to a mock trial, cut off its head and threw it into the Tiber. He himself was subsequently deposed, and strangled in prison. In the years that followed, the power of electing to the pope-dom actually fell into the hands of intriguing and licentious Theodora and her equally unprincipled daughters. . . . Boniface VII. (A.D. 974), in the space of a few weeks after his elevation, plundered the treasury and basilica of St. Peter

of all he could conveniently carry off and fled to Constantinople. . . . Benedict IX. (A.D. 1033) was consecrated pope, according to some authorities, at the age of ten or twelve years, and became notorious for adulteries and murders. At length he resolved on marrying his first cousin; and when her father would not consent except on the condition of his resigning the popedom, he sold it for a large sum, and consecrated the purchaser as his successor. Such are a few of the most prominent features of the ecclesiastical history of those dreadful times, when in the words of St. Bruno, 'the world lay in wickedness, holiness had disappeared, justice had perished, and truth had been buried.' " It was a Pagan revival of indefinitely greater strength and evil than that of Julian the Apostate; for then paganism had been without the Church, but now the Church itself was

paganized. Tiberius and Caligula, those monsters of heathendom, were now outdone by the "holy fathers" of Christendom, who vied with one another in the practice of the vilest vices, the rule of the Christian Church being actually called, and truthfully called, a "pornocracy."

The distress of the people was most profound. As though the natural terrors were not sufficiently acute, they fell into abnormal fear of the supernatural. It was believed that the end of the world was nigh. Fearful portents were seen in sky and sea. Every night men laid weary heads upon their pillows, in dread expectation of the midnight trump of doom. Each morning the sun blanched their faces with the promise of a burning world. Nerveless, they forsook accustomed tasks, awaiting in idle cowardice the final hour. Famine fell upon the land. Greece, Italy, France, and England were

involved in it. The people actually fell into the horrors of cannibalism. "Men ate earth, weeds, roots, the bark of trees, vermin, dead bodies." Mothers devoured their children, and children their mothers, in the frenzy of hunger. Men were murdered to be eaten, and human flesh was almost openly sold in the markets. Storrs says: "The multitude of the dead was so great that they could not be buried, and wolves flocked to feast on their bodies. Great numbers were tumbled promiscuously into vast trenches. A state of fierce cannibal savagery appeared likely to mark the end of a fallen and ruined race, for which the Lord had died in vain. It was not wonderful that men following their dead relations to the grave sometimes cast themselves into it, to end at once their intolerable life." The Roman Catholic historian, Michelet, has dramatically pointed out that "the very statues

of the period are sad and pinched, as if the dreadful apprehension of the age had sunk into the softened stone." It was the age of the power of darkness. The whole world lay in wickedness, and the Church of Christ was asleep.

Then, in that darkest, stillest hour which is just before the dawn, a silver bugle rang clear and shrill, like the call of the chanticleer. It was God's breath that filled it; and it thrilled with the music of Christ's name. From sea to sea, from land to land it sounded. Men rubbed their eyes; leaped to their feet in the darkness; buckled on their scabbards; flashed blades high in the unresponsive air; shouted to the chill gray dawn, "It is the will of God!" and rushed, six hundred thousand strong, towards the holy city of Jerusalem, "to break the heathen and uphold the Christ." Seven times the silver bugle sounded. Seven times it

roused new sleepers to the hurry of impetuous warfare; seven times the sons of reawakening Europe flung themselves across the seas against the sullen Saracens, who stood like a dark wall between them and the holy home of their Lord the Christ—only to be cast back on the sodden shores, clotted with the blood of defeat, or else pale corpses. Even children, a score of thousand children, mere tender babes, piped with their treble voices, “It is the will of God!” and sought to redeem, with swords in their dimpled hands, the home of the Babe of Bethlehem; but they, too—O pitiful!—were lost, a myriad babes in the wood, their only shroud the leaves, their only priest the robin.

What a catastrophe! men will say, have said. The Crusades—what a failure, what a vast mistake of history! But in the end history does not makes mistakes.

When we cannot understand her, it is only because we are not wise enough. For history is the handmaid of the Almighty, and "facts are the finger of God." The Crusades? Men of science tell us that to every sleeper, in every night, comes a moment fraught with the baleful threat of death. The tide of the blood is ebbing. The hammer of the pulse is almost silent. The great engine of the heart throbs its least and faintest. Then, they tell us, unless at that fearful time there come some stir of warning to the sleeper, some whispering call from the depths of the darkness to startle the engine to its work again, and the pulse to its duty, and the blood to its flow—then the heart sleeps forever, and when friends come in the morning they find a dead man there. So we may say that the call to the Crusades saved the life of Europe. Their origin has been a mystery. His-

torians have stood amazed at this vast sudden movement of millions towards the same frail sentimental goal. But the call to the Crusades was the call of God. The sleepers stirred. Their pulses set a-beating to the quick throb of war drums. The sluggish blood sprang once more like a brook. The Crusaders were defeated, but Europe was saved, because she was awake. The darkness was overpast. New life came, as always, out of the East into the West. From that moment the page of history brightens. The period of those strange holy wars, apparently so unsuccessful, is precisely the period of the dawn from the darkest age that has ever eclipsed the world since Christ was slain, into the requickened life of day. And so, in the wiser way, those wars were gloriously successful. God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts. "He moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to per-

form." The call to the Crusades was a thoughtful loving device of the great watchful Father to save His sleeping children from the sleep of death, as He waked them with the music of Christ's name.

Moreover, the Crusades did a service not for Europe only, but for the whole world; not for that age alone, but for all time. Think what a flower grew up from the blood of those fallen knights! It is the flower of chivalry. Shame on that cheap humor that would pawn our holiest traditions for a laugh! Pity it is that all of us "Yankees" could not go and dwell for a season in King Arthur's court, there to learn at least a higher worship than the worship of the dollar. No single gift has come to us from Christianity, that great source of all best gifts, which is of sweeter influence in the mutual relationships of men than the spirit of chiv-

alry. The knights, once sworn to a noble cause, were always malcontent with ignobility. Unsuccessful in attaining the material object of their welfare, they did but learn a firmer grasp on the snowy shields of the ideal. Failing to gain possession of the Holy Land, they yet were led, through pursuing a noble and romantic purpose, to know of a holier land, of that fair kingdom of God which is within. The inspiring history of that holy city, Jerusalem, which they sought in vain to take and keep, told them of a greatness which is greater than that of taking a city. Schooled in the noble discipline of fighting, unafraid, whole hordes of overwhelming heathen, they were wed forever to the battle of the weak against the strong, and so returned from fighting the strong men of the East to fight for the weak of the West. The knight's banner, once uplifted, never falls: for it is the

essence of knighthood to battle for ideals, and ideals are unaffected by material failures. You cannot hurt a spirit. See, then, what rich bequest comes to the world from these fanatical Crusades. They taught the world the battle of the weak against the strong; the battle for the spiritual against the material and gross; the battle of ideals against dollars; the battle for women against villains, of romanticism against realism, of poetry against the prosaic, of right against wrong. But for the Crusades, men perhaps would not know the manly gesture of baring the head to women—that remarkable tribute of physical strength to spiritual strength. But for the Crusades there might be now no clear-eyed lad to defend a child against a bully. But for the Crusades, our minstrelsy would be unspeakably impoverished; for the story of the foolish doings of those

romantic knights has been the theme of all our wisest music since their time.

Tennyson's glowing pages draw all their light from chivalry. The great Victorian poet has, indeed, uttered the very creed of knighthood for us, when, speaking as King Arthur to his knights, he cries:

I made them lay their hands in mine and swear  
To reverence the King, as if he were  
Their conscience, and their conscience as their  
King,

To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,  
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,  
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,  
To honour his own word as if his God's,  
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,  
And worship her by years of noble deeds,  
Until they won her; for indeed I knew  
Of no more subtle master under heaven  
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,  
Not only to keep down the base in man,  
But teach high thought, and amiable words

And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

And courtliness, and the desire of fame,

What ear so dull as to be deaf to that noble music? What heart so numb as not to thrill with the charm of knightliness? Chivalry: it may be called the fairest flower of history, sprung from the root of that tree which Roman soldiers planted one day, high on Calvary. For as the source of knighthood is the Crusades, so the source of the Crusades is the cross.

That is what the word means. A crusade is a war for the cross. The sign of enlistment was not a cap and a row of buttons, it was a red cross on the right shoulder. Becoming a soldier-knight was in those days called "the taking of the cross." Peter the Hermit, on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, had witnessed for himself the pollution of the holy places by blasphemous Mahometans, and secured permission from the Patriarch of the East

and the Pope of the West to announce these pollutions to all Christendom, with an appeal for redress and deliverance. Pope Urban II. gave him the enthusiastic support of his influence and his eloquence. At Clermont, in the year 1095, the great orator addressed a vast concourse composed largely of proud knights, whose chief business had hitherto been plunder and feud. "Yea," he exclaimed, "the knighthood of Christ hath even plundered Christ's fold, exchanging the deeds of a knight for the works of night. As ye love your souls, now go forth boldly, and, quitting this mutual slaughter, take up arms for the household of faith. Christ himself will be your leader, as, more valiantly than did the Israelites of old, you fight for your Jerusalem. It will be a goodly thing to die in that city, where Christ died for you. Let not love of any earthly possession detain you. It were

better to die in warfare than behold the evils that befall the holy places. Start upon the way to the holy sepulchre; wrench the land from the accursed race, and subdue it to yourselves. Thus shall you spoil your foes of their wealth and return home victorious, or else, purpled with your own blood, receive an everlasting reward." As the voice of the speaker died away, there went up one cry from the assembled host: "It is the will of God! It is the will of God," Then raising his eyes to heaven and stretching out his hand for silence, Urban renewed his speech with words of praise: "This day hath been fulfilled in your midst the saying of our Lord, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' Had not the Lord been in your midst, you would not thus have all uttered the same cry. Wherefore I tell you it is God who

hath inspired you with His voice. So let the Lord's motto be your battle-cry, and when you go forth to meet the enemy this shall be your watchword: 'It is the will of God! It is the will of God!'" The multitudes flung themselves prostrate before the sign of the uplifted cross. Proud knights bent the knee, and even grovelled in the dust, before the sign of Calvary, pledging with kisses and with vows their devotion unto death. On the right shoulder the insignia were affixed; garments were destroyed that each might bear proudly on his shoulder the sign and seal of his undying devotion, even the red, the bloody cross. The Crusades were wars for the cross. The thought uppermost in the hearts of all re-awakened Europe at that time was this, and this alone: The Taking of the Cross.

What transformation is denoted by that phrase! The cross had been, but a few

centuries before, the symbol of unutterable shame. Crucifixion was the lowest of deaths; men spoke of "the ignominious death of the cross," a death of peculiar shame, reserved for the lowest degraded criminals. Yet now, in those ages of the Crusades, it had become a badge of honor, worn proudly by the lordliest knights. It is a wonderful transformation—as though in our day men were to begin to paint the gallows upon their coats of arms. Think of what it means! A Jewish peasant, bearing the common name of Jesus, had spent three years of his life in such a way as to make even his own family say that he was "beside himself." Deserted at the last even by his own chosen twelve, one of them delivered him into the hands of Roman soldiers, who mocked him, scourged him, slapped him, and spat in his face, the victim of their cruel Saturnalian feast. His boasted crown turned out to

be but a crown of thorns, plaited by the coarse thick fingers of some Roman guardsman. For his sceptre, they put a reed into his hand. Then they knelt, with mocking laughter, and hailed him as a king. Silent, pale, helpless, he could not save himself. So the Roman soldiers crucified him, and speared him, and at the foot of the cross raffled away his garments. So died he: in perfect loneliness, utter defeat, and profoundest shamefulness. Yet, because of a rumor that spread abroad shortly after his death, people began to believe in him again, and a sect sprang up. This sect gained a following at length in Rome; because, as the citizen Tacitus bitterly confesses, everything worthless and vile drifted to the capital. Nero burnt these fanatics. Trajan outlawed them. The gentle Aurelius did not scruple to murder them. Decius slew them wholesale. Diocletian and Galerius

sought them out man by man, woman by woman, child by child, determined that not one of the vermin should remain to corrupt the Roman State. Then, after two hundred and fifty years of this fierce and bloody work, the State rested in weary satisfaction and celebrated its victory.

But the next emperor is a Christian. He takes the eagles from his standards, and replaces them with crosses. The badge of shame becomes a sign of glory. He bids his Roman soldiers fight in the name of the crucified Jew. Roman soldiers bow the knee to Him whom Roman soldiers scourged. Again do they put a crown upon His head and a sceptre in His hand, but not in scorn. Jesus is their King, above Cæsar. Galilee has conquered Rome. The empire becomes Christian by imperial decree. Christians, no longer wandering about in deserts or

dwelling in the caves of the earth, drive in gilded chariots of state, becoming the most honored officers of the empire. They have exchanged their goat-skins for brocade, the purple of mourning for the purple of rule. The poor are rich, the debased are exalted, the vanquished are the victors. "Constantine the Defender" succeeds "Galerius the Butcher." The Crusaders did but follow Constantine when they took the cross; and millions since have followed the Crusaders in choosing as their highest, proudest symbol that which was, till Jesus died, the badge of shame. To-day it is the centre of our noblest paintings. Women wear it pendant on their breasts. Plain men choose it as their single ornament. Our books are stamped with it. It gleams, gilded, from the summit of our noblest architecture. And always there dwells in this simple transverse figure a dignity and

glory belonging to no other symbol known to man.

Why is it so? Why this remarkable transformation of an ancient gallows into a modern emblem of glory? Marvellous as it may seem, this is the simple reason: because that outlawed Jew did die thereon. Because this cross was the scaffold of the Man of Nazareth; because it upbore in death His suffering body, therefore it has become a symbol loved and adored and glorious. He it was that uplifted it. Because of Him who bore the cross did Roman emperors weave it with gold upon their purple standards. And it was supreme devotion to Jesus Christ, a thousand years after He had died, and in the darkest of all ages since the black year of His death—it was supreme devotion to Him that led those millions of Crusaders to the taking of the cross. Let us seize this thought in all its full significance:

the supreme attractiveness of that grand figure whose death could glorify a gallows! "I, if I be lifted up," said He, "will draw all men unto me." Superbly is that prophecy proved true. Hearts of iron have leaped irresistibly and forever unto Him, the Great Magnet. Thousands of earth's knightliest souls have taken the cross and followed Him.

Beginning with His own earliest disciples—what a splendid vision had the beloved John of the supreme kingliness of Jesus! "Behold a white horse! And He that is seated thereon is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes are as a flaming fire, and on His head are many crowns—many crowns! And He hath a Name written, which no man knoweth, but He Himself. And He is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and His Name is called the Word of God. And the arm-

ies which are in heaven follow Him, upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a Name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." Simple contact for three short years with this superb crucified King uplifted humble John the fisherman into John the rapt seer, the poet, and the saint. Think also of that other Galilean fisherman; hard-handed, harsh, soiled with his unseemly trade, whose brittle character was transformed into the Rock of the Church through the impartation of the knightliness of Jesus: "Who," as Cephas cries with divine enthusiasm—"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." So, by the firm yet gentle and supremely faithful knightliness of his

Leader was this impetuous, uncouth and faithless fisherman transformed into one who was faithful to his Master even unto death, humbly requesting, when they led him, too, to be crucified, that they affix him to the cross head downwards, since he was not worthy even to die in the same manner as had his knightly Lord.

Ah, those white-clad heavenly armies of John's vision—those ascended followers of Jesus, who follow in their Master's train: see them as they march, that glorious cavalry, clothed in glistening linen, white and clean! Hear their shouts of supreme devotion to Him for whose sake they were led on earth to take the cross, whereas now in heaven they wear the crown. Leading that host of white-clad armies is the fine old chieftain of Tarsus, who fought a good fight, who kept the faith, and who went half regretfully (since to live was Christ) to the gain of

the crown of righteousness, his meed for the taking of the cross. Once he had despised that cross. But a single eye-to-eye vision of the kingly Christ transformed him from enemy to friend. Hear his devotion utter itself in angelic eloquence as he cries: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Unto this King eternal, immortal, invisible, the Only Wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever!"

Out of those thousands voices of ascended knights a few dim echoes come to us. Hear Augustine's ascription of devotion to his Leader, as he cries: "O Truth who art Eternity! And Love who art Truth! And Eternity who art Love!

Thou art my All, to Thee do I sigh night and day. When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was somewhat for me to see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly, didst beat back the weakness of my sight, and I trembled with love and awe: and I perceived myself to be far off from Thee in the region of unlikeness." And yet—"For Thyself Thou madest us; and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee." There comes to us also the impassioned voice of the monk Bernard, who preached the Second Crusade: "If thou writest, nothing therein hath savor to me unless I read Jesus in it. If thou discourest, nothing there is agreeable to me unless in it also 'Jesus' resounds. He is as honey in the mouth, a melody in the ear, a song of jubilee in the heart. He is our medicine as well. Is

any among you saddened? Let Jesus enter into his heart, and thence leap to his lips, and lo! at the rising illumination of His name, every cloud flies away, serenity returns." Often are the words of this mediæval monk on our lips as we sing,

Jesus, the very thought of thee,  
With sweetness fills my breast,  
But sweeter far Thy face to see,  
And in Thy presence rest.

Next we hear the peaceful prayer of the German mystic, Thomas à Kempis: "Grant to me above all things that can be desired, to rest in Thee, and in Thee to have my heart at peace. Thou art the true peace of the heart, Thou its only rest; out of Thee all things are hard and restless. In this very peace, that is, in Thee, Thou One Chiefest Eternal Good, I will sleep and rest."

The turbulent Luther, whose words were "half-battles," turns for peace and

soothing to the gentle Cross-Bearer, whispering ever so gently to his heart, "Keep still, and He will mould thee into the right shape." A hundred years later, we hear the consecrated voice of Francis de Sales pledging his will to Christ's in everything; "without reserve, without a 'but,' an 'if,' or a limit." Then Fénelon offers himself in total sacrifice with the words: "Smite, or heal; depress me, or raise me up; I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them; I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice; I yield myself to Thee; I would have no other desire than to do Thy will." In our own time, there has lately entered into the company of that white-clad throng one who prayed: "O Lord, who art as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, who beholdest Thy weak creatures weary of labor, weary of pleasure, weary of hope deferred, weary of self; in Thine abundant

compassion, and unutterable tenderness, bring us, I pray thee, unto Thy rest." And then the clear-eyed Christian poet of the South, Sidney Lanier; hear him, after he has set all of earth's greatest names beside the name of Jesus, how he cries with transcendent admiration:

But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,  
But Thee, O poets' Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,  
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,  
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,  
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—  
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,  
What least defect or shadow of defect,  
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,  
Of inference loose, what lack of grace  
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,—  
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,  
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?

What a goodly company have followed  
Jesus in the taking of the cross! How  
many thousands of stainless knights have  
claimed Him as their leader! Truly, after

this brief backward glance into the devotional history of the purest hearts that ever have throbbed on this old earth, we may sing with new understanding the words of that grand ancient hymn, the hymn of the valiant Crusaders themselves. As they marched on their venturesome quest against His foes, the fair meadow-lands of France smiled to them of the gentle love of Christ, and the mighty German forests whispered of His majesty. In the dazzling Eastern sun that shone by day they saw His light, and in the silent wonders of the heavens by night they read His glory. To this terrible army with banners all created things did but speak of Him their Creator, Who was to them the Bright and Morning Star, the One Among Ten Thousand, and the Altogether Lovely. Thus it is that the music of this great "Crusaders' Hymn" rolls through the ages down to

us, throbbing with the martial tread of  
the armies of the Lord of Hosts, pulsing  
with the heart's devotion of a myriad of  
Christian knights—

Beautiful Saviour! King of Creation,  
True Son of God and Son of Man!  
Truly I'd love Thee, truly I'd serve Thee,  
Knight of my soul, my Joy, my Crown!

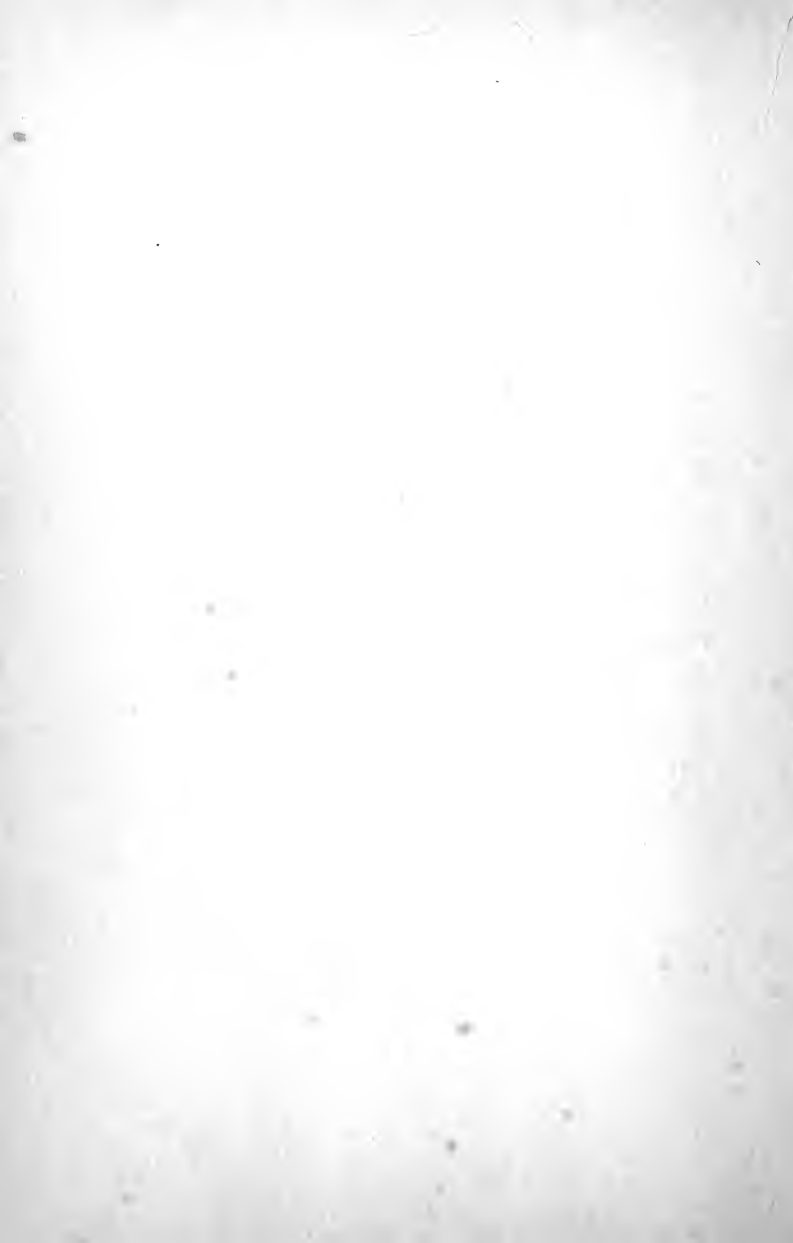
Fair are the meadows, fairer the woodlands,  
Robed in the flowers of blooming spring;  
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,  
He makes our sorrowing spirits sing.

Fair is the sunshine, fairer the moonlight,  
And all the sparkling stars on high;  
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,  
Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Saviour! King of Creation!  
True Son of God and Son of Man!  
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,  
Now and forevermore be Thine.



# LIBERTY AND LAW



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF PATRIOTISM

It may be set forth almost as an axiom that every virtue has its counterfeit, which is invariably vicious. Bravery is the essential virtue of manhood, but its counterfeit is the bravado of the bully, which may degenerate into vicious brutality. At the other extreme, the gentleness of a gentleman is certainly a virtue, but effeminacy is the accompaniment of cowardice. Neatness has its counterfeit in foppery, economy in miserliness, culture in pedantry, devoutness in cant,

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\* Delivered before the Southern Educational Association at Jacksonville, Florida, under the title, "The School as a Check upon Lawlessness."

purity in prudery, humility in servility, love in lust, and pure patriotism in impure politics.

It is so with the great twin truths whereon society is founded: I mean liberty and law. The counterfeit of law is tyranny, while that of liberty is license, which is only another name for lawlessness. Liberty and law are twin sisters, bound together by a closer unity than the famous Siamese twins, so that to hurt the one is to maim the other. But tyranny and license are enormous antipodal evils united only in their antagonism to the State.

Men have always shown a tendency to drive these two great principles of law and liberty into their counterfeit vicious extremes, and to this fatal fact may be traced all of the woes of government. It is true of Church as well as of State. The religion that we profess is ultimately

founded on the conception of the Divine Fatherhood. Now, fatherhood implies both liberty and law. Because the father loves his child, he wishes the child to be free; for liberty is of the essence of love.\* But the wise father knows that liberty can be attained only through law. To give the child license would be to subvert his best interests; he would never have liberty at all, because his lower nature would inevitably control his higher nature and the worst sort of slavery result. Therefore law is as much the outcome of love as liberty is. The earlier Jews had a beautiful comprehension of this fact. David praises God for His "free spirit," but never ignores His "perfect law." He unites the two under a conception of fatherhood both majestic and tender, which reaches its wonderful acme in the twenty-

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\* Both words arise from the Teutonic *Lub*.

third Psalm, wherein we hear of rod and staff, but also of still waters and green pastures. Had the sheep license, he would go astray; God's law keeps him in liberty. The later Jews, however, forgot the liberal heart of God, and laid all emphasis on His law. This made them at length conceive of Him as a tyrant, and Pharisaism was the outcome of this tyrannous conception. Then the Gospel came. I do not hesitate to say that its great object, considered from one point of view, was just to restore the unity of law and liberty in men's ideas about God. But the reaction in behalf of liberty tended to swing out into lawlessness, so that we hear Peter, the great apostle of authority, warning the early Christians against using their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness,\* while Paul, the apostle of lib-

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\* 1 Peter ii. 16.

erty, calls love the fulfilling of the law.\*

The woes of the Church from that day to this have come from a sort of alternating emphasis upon law or upon liberty, instead of an equal unifying emphasis on both, so that she has suffered now from ecclesiastical tyranny, and again from antinomian license.

History abounds in similar illustrations. How has it been with America? Our tendency from the very beginning has led us to emphasize liberty at the expense of law. The country was discovered and settled under the influence of a vast revolt against tyranny. The intellectual revolt dates from the year 1453, when the gates of the Golden Horn at last moved on their ancient hinges, flooding all Europe from the classical springs

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\* Romans xiii. 10.

of the East. It was the impetus of the Renaissance that impelled the little Spanish caravel across the stormy seas; the discovery of America was a direct result of the downfall of Constantinople. Larger revolts were sure to follow: the Reformation is the religious side of the Renaissance. It was under the influence of the tremendous protest against tyranny begun by Martin Luther in 1517 that this country was settled by those colonists that have meant most to her history—the Puritans and the Huguenots and the Salzburgers, whose very names have Protestant associations. Moreover, these and other colonists, led hither by love of liberty, found themselves in a vast untrammelled continent to breathe whose air was to become, as it were, drunk with a sense of freedom. The Revolutionary War was an inevitable consequence of such conditions. Its success led to the foundation

of a republic upon principles that seek a maximum of liberty by means of an irreducible minimum of law. Whenever this minimum is still further diminished through blindness to the equable principles of government, the fundamental balance is at once destroyed and liberty descends into license. We sadly need at this hour a strong readjustment of the scales. Who will deny this?

Take, for example, the law as applied to the protection of human life, which is supposed to be its primary function. The individualist frenzy of libertinism has been carried to such a degree in this "land of the free" that human life is actually ten times cheaper to-day in the United States than in the pagan empire of Japan.\* In a valuable address deliv-

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\* For the statistics, see article by Dr. Julius D. Dreher in *The State*, Columbia, for October 18, 1904.

ered at the St. Louis Fair, Judge William H. Thomas, of Alabama, indicated the unenviable pre-eminence of the United States in the number of annual homicidal crimes. In the German Empire there are about five homicides committed annually for every million of the population; in England and Wales, ten or eleven; in France, fourteen or fifteen; in Belgium, sixteen, and in the United States about 130. We have been accustomed to charge our crimes upon the foreigner; but these figures do not justify that view; and Judge Thomas further points out the striking fact that among the five subdivisions of our country "the two geographic divisions having the most foreign-born show the lowest rate of homicides."

A dozen years ago we were all reading a startling book bearing the suggestive title, "In Darkest London." This city is noted for a combination of conditions that

tend to breed crime,—such as racial mixture, depressing climate, density of population, and comparative illiteracy. Its crowded slums would seem to furnish a veritable hotbed for vice and lawlessness. I have therefore been interested in a comparison between the homicidal record of “darkest London” for 1903 and that of my own adopted State, which I choose for illustration because I wish to be impartial. London has an area of 688 square miles, with a population of 6,500,000; that is to say, 9,500 people inhabit every square mile in London. South Carolina has an area of 30,570 square miles and a population somewhat exceeding 1,340,000; that is to say, about forty-four people to the mile. In climate the State is richly favored, there is no greater average of white illiteracy than in London, and the aggravations of our race problem are offset by racial admixtures among the

crowded slums of the world's metropolis. Every advantage is with the State as against the city. And yet London, with its six and a half million souls, had only twenty-four murders during the year in question, while in South Carolina, with a population of one and a half million, two hundred and twenty-two people were tried in the courts for homicide. Not only so, but in London there was no "undiscovered crime," as all the murderers were arrested, except in four cases, where they committed suicide. In South Carolina, however, we are told that "many homicides are committed for which no one is tried. Hence the actual number of homicides was considerably more than two hundred and twenty-two."\* The figures are a little better now, but a striking

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\* Dr. J. D. Dreher, *The State*, October 18, 1904.

feature of the situation lies in the fact that even where criminals are arrested and tried the law is very seldom enforced.

In the general matter of lawlessness, my own State is no worse than others of the Union. As I shall show, the lawlessness takes on different forms of expression, according as conditions vary. Judge Thomas, in the paper from which I have already quoted, shows conclusively that the variations in the enforcement of law do not seem to be due to climate, race, density of population, illiteracy, form of government, or length of governmental experience. The terrible facts cannot be explained by any of these theories, each of which has had able advocates. I think that our deplorable national notoriety in the taking of human life is simply the result of a historical deluge of liberty, rising at last to the floodtide of license,

which is proving too strong for the protective barriers of law.

Perhaps the most alarming phase of the whole situation consists in the enormous increase of homicidal crime in this country within the past twenty-five years. If the same ratio between the number of homicides and the total population of the country now prevailed as was the case in 1881, there would have been less than two thousand homicides in 1903; but as a matter of fact there were nearly nine thousand. That is to say, twenty-five years ago twenty-five people were killed annually out of every million of our population, but in 1903 we slaughtered one hundred and twelve per million, so that the danger of murder is four and one-half times greater in this country to-day than it was in 1881.\*

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\* For statistics see McClure's Magazine, December, 1904.

But these figures, startling though they are, do not even yet begin to indicate the number of human lives that are sacrificed in this country every year as a direct result of lawlessness. What of the Iroquois Theatre horror and the General Slocum disaster? We claim to be a Christian people, but those human bodies were really burnt in sacrificial offering to our American Moloch of greed. It has been proved beyond question that there were laws sufficient to prevent those disasters; but that the law-keepers were susceptible to bribery, and that the "captains of industry" who owned the theatre and the steamboat preferred license to licenses. The railroads of the country kill more than seven thousand human beings every year, a record without parallel in any other country on earth; who shall say how many of these mutilated corpses are victims to the spirit of lawlessness? Mr.

S. S. McClure describes our wholesale criminals, if I may so term them, under three heads: First, saloon-keepers, gamblers, and others who engage in businesses that degrade; second, contractors, capitalists, bankers, and others who can make money by getting franchises and other property of the community cheaper by bribery than by paying the community; third, politicians who are willing to seek and accept office with the aid and endorsement of the classes already mentioned. He rightly says that these men "constitute a class of criminals very different from ordinary criminals who break laws; these men destroy law. They are enemies of the human race. They are destroyers of a people. They are murderers of a civilization."

The spirit of lawlessness covers the whole country. Its most tangible expression is in the taking of human life,

whether by wholesale or retail. In the great cities, where the prevailing motives are commercial, we have holocausts. In the South, where the prevailing motives are social, we have lynchings. In certain communities, such as Chicago, San Francisco, and Pittsburg, we murder both by wholesale and by retail. Everywhere we have license, and unless we can check it the country is doomed.

There will not be any rapid transformation in this matter, depend upon it. That is impossible. We shall have no marked change until a new generation comes upon the scene, trained to nobler ideals. We must begin with the child. There are three institutions that are theoretically concerned with child training: the family, the Church, and the school. I say "theoretically," because a glance at any of our comic papers will indicate the anomalous conditions of family life in this

country. Some one has caustically observed that "a problem in America has to begin by being a jest, and we laugh at our troubles long before we think of doing anything about them." Consequently, we have satires by our prominent humorists on "the bringing up of parents," but the parents have not yet learned to take the matter seriously. At least the father has not. In the theoretical home the mother stands for the principle of liberty or love, while the father stands for law; but in the practical American home the father usually stands for nothing at all. He is far too busy to give any attention to the duties of fatherhood. He is out in the market making money for his child, forgetting that the coin of character transcends every other kind of wealth. American children are deprived of the needful discipline of fatherhood, and the disobedient child inevitably grows into a

lawless citizen, for "men are but children of a larger growth." I say it with a sense of bitter shame, but I think we need hardly look to our present generation of homes, with their altarless hearths and their headless tables, for the instillation of lawfulness into our children.

Nor yet, on the whole, to the Church. The Church in this country for the most part takes little account of the children. In Europe the Protestants have their parochial or religious schools with daily instruction in the fundamental truths of religion, besides rigid catechetical systems. Over here we seem to think that one hour of one day in each week is time enough for the Church to devote to the children; and what a strange sort of devotion it is! You have heard that caustic conundrum, "When is a school not a school? When it's a Sunday-school." Better methods are coming to prevail within very recent

years, but I still submit that the average Sunday-school affords utterly inadequate opportunity for the moral training of children.

There remains, then, the school as a possible check upon lawlessness. Is it possible? I believe so. I believe that it is actually within our reach, teachers of the men of to-morrow, to lay upon their hearts now while they are plastic children, such a regard for the dignity and sacredness of law as will forever keep our liberties secure. My plan is so simple that I fear you will smile at it, but remember that our complex life breeds an undeserved and unworthy contempt of simple things. I wish that it might be made a part of the duty of every public-school teacher throughout the land just to teach the children the Ten Commandments. They do not know them; where have they had a chance to learn them?

Do you think it would mean nothing to them in after-life, when tempted to do evil, to have these ineradicable law-words of childhood rise with an imperative "Thou shalt not"? Then your theory of psychology is a very different one from mine. Among the supreme restraints of a grown man's life are the inlaid imperatives of childhood.

I think that the simplicity of my plan has one thing at least to commend it: nobody could object to it, whether Catholic or Protestant or Jew. Besides, the proper teaching of the Decalogue carries with it weightier matter than one might think. I would have the commandment "Thou shalt not steal" so taught as to include not only the petty thief, but also the millionaire. "By what process of reasoning can we make a moral distinction between the larceny of the despised green-goods or gold-brick swindler and the equally real

rich and quasi-respectable promoters of larceny accomplished, for example, by the the American Shipbuilding Company, that bubble of fraud, concerning which the public press has had so much to say recently?" \* And yet, the "confidence man" is hurried off to prison as a past-master in swindling, while the "captain of industry" is held up before our ambitious youth as a past-master of "success." It is as Emerson said, we need to correct our theory of success; and the best corrective I can think of is a plain teaching of the Ten Commandments.

I would have the ancient word, "Thou shalt not kill," taught to our children in the South to mean exactly what it says. Dr. Julius D. Dreher goes to the core of the matter when he writes:

"The reports of lynching for the first

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\* See George W. Alger on "Unpunished Commercial Crime," *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1904.

few years always assigned as the cause the 'usual crime.' But it is no longer the usual crime that calls forth the vengeance of the mob. If men may be lynched for rape, may they not also be lynched for murder? Very little reason satisfied the mob; in fact, it does not reason; it draws no fine distinctions. Vengeance is its motto. When the mob wanted to lynch a murderer it did so. And then the list of lynchable crimes grew longer and longer. After a while misdemeanors were added to the list and negroes have been lynched for trifling offences, for which our laws do not even provide a penalty.

"Men who trample on the laws of course have no respect for courts; and so the mob enters even the temples of justice to execute its lawless will. It takes prisoners from officers and jails when the hanging of such prisoners by the orderly

processes of the law is as certain as anything human can be. The mob usually confines itself to killing and occasionally burning negroes; but now and then a white man is the victim. In South Carolina three white men have been lynched by white men and one by negroes, which is, so far as I know, the only case in which negroes have lynched a white man. But negroes have lynched a number of negroes.

“It is high time to inquire whither are we drifting. It seems to me that we have now drifted so far that all thoughtful persons ought to see plainly that the only position for law-abiding and law-respecting people to take is this: That lynching for any crime whatever is itself a crime against our civilization. We cannot put down crime by committing other crimes. Lawlessness breeds lawlessness; hatred begets hatred; revenge incites revenge.

If we sow the wind we may expect to reap the whirlwind. If we sow lawlessness, hatred, revenge, cruelty, and brutality, we should not expect to enjoy the fair fruits of civilization. We should rather expect to raise the hydra-headed monster of anarchy and barbarism."

There are others of these old commandments that need new emphasis and plain interpretation. We need a new remembrance of the Sabbath day; a re-enforcement of filial piety; a purer social life; a cleaner tongue and a heart that covets only the best gifts. Above all, we need to remember the supreme law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength."

I am not alone in my insistence upon this simple plan. The chancellor of New York University said at the opening of his session in 1903: "I wish we could require from every freshman a Sunday-

school diploma that would certify that he knew by heart the Ten Commandments, the sermon on the Mount, a church catechism of some kind, and a score of the Scripture Psalms and best classic hymns. This university will join any association of universities and colleges that will demand them as an entrance requirement." The truth is, we are exalting the intellect at the expense not only of the hand, but still more of the heart, in our educational systems. We are in danger of deifying the mind, and of dethroning the morals by sheer neglect here in America. The facts that I have cited call aloud for new methods in our schools, which seem to be the sole training places of the rising generation. We must emphasize the law—that comprehensive moral law which is alone sufficient as a guide of human conduct. There is no danger that we exaggerate the importance of law; our entire environ-

ment, as I have tried to show, provides against that. I wish that we could have a simple text-book on "moral law" prepared for use in every school; teaching the sacredness of law as such, and based upon some such simple code as the Decalogue, with practical application to our modern needs. Meanwhile, we should face the facts. Nothing is ever to be gained by denying the truth, and the first step towards the quest for a remedy is the clear recognition of a disease.



THE CENTURY IN  
LITERATURE



# THE CENTURY IN LITERATURE

## A REVIEW AND A FORECAST

A century is, of course, a purely arbitrary division of time. If "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," then a cycle of time would have equal significance if it included eighty years instead of a hundred, or began and ended at any points you please. The length of our cycles happens to be determined by our use of the decimal system, and the point of their beginning is fixed by the birth of Jesus. It is not always logical to cut human history into so many equal lengths, using a century instead of a yardstick, for often a great movement has nothing whatever to do with arbitrary divisions of time.

Nevertheless it is usually proper to speak of the specific "character" of a century. While unreal distinctions ought not to be made, yet it is undoubtedly true in these later centuries, at least, that each of them has a certain individuality of its own. Perhaps this is due in a measure to the quiet, unrealized influence of these arbitrary divisions of time. Is it not true that the whole of thoughtful mankind, this very day seems to be agitated by an impression that we must somehow give distinctive character to this new-born Twentieth Century? There is no telling to what extent the history of Christian civilization has come to be affected, during the course of the Christian ages, by the silent influence of the century idea.

The progress of civilization is inevitably reflected by the history of literature; for literature, no less than art, always responds to the dominant ideals of a time

and a people. As the great world spins "forever down the ringing grooves of change" the crystal lens of literature is continually focussing its varied moods and movements into a small, but accurate, photograph, which finally develops as the permanent record of the race. Herder was the first to formulate this truth, self-evident to us now, and since his time the historians of literature have been setting themselves to the task of producing a history of civilization based upon the national literatures. It is enough for the present purpose to call attention to the fact that an analysis of the English literature of the nineteenth century will in effect show forth the spiritual elements of the age itself as related to the English-speaking peoples. That is to say, the century in English literature will show the century in Anglo-Saxon life. So close is

the relationship between literature and life.

The clear-cut character of the nineteenth century in English literature is nothing short of remarkable. It differs as completely from the hundred years that went before as George Eliot differs from Lady Mary Montagu. Indeed, it were perhaps not over-fanciful to take these two women as literary types of their respective centuries, around whose living forms dead facts may be quickened into vivid truth. Being women, it is not impossible that, with womanhood's quick sympathies and intuitions, they did somehow discern the very inmost spirit of the times in which they lived,—the *Zeitgeist*, as the Germans say; being great women, it is not without the bounds of reason that they should somehow seize and actually embody in themselves that spirit, thus become incarnate. The claim has already

been advanced for Lady Mary Montagu. She has been called "the eighteenth century masquerading as a woman." "Like her age, she was absorbed in the shows of things." "She possesses its cleverness, its clear head, its brittle wit. She exhibits also its lack of strong natural feeling, its indifference to the primal truths of existence, its tendency to sacrifice the Ten Commandments to an epigram. She was as much a product of her time as her acid friend and enemy, Pope; as the rocking-horse metre of the contemporary poetry; as the patched and powdered ladies of the court; as the Whig and Tory parties; as the polite infidelities of the fashionable." "Of the weakness and strength of that age of light without sweetness Lady Mary is representative" to a very marked degree. We get an index to the frivolous spirit of her times in the very name of the famous "Kit-Kat Club," which numbered

her as perhaps the chief of its reigning belles. Mr. Christopher Catt was an obliging caterer of fashionable London, famous for his excellent mutton pies. A circle of literary brilliancy, comprising the Dukes of Marlborough and Devonshire, Lord Halifax, Sir Robert Walpole, Congreve, Granville and Addison, revolved around the savory tables of Mr. Christopher Catt, whose abbreviated name they lovingly appropriated, and so it was that the most famous literary circle of the eighteenth century in England became known as the Kit-Kat Club, whose delicate toasting glasses were each inscribed with a separate dainty couplet in honor of some reigning belle.

Now it is strikingly significant of the marked transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century spirit that the Kit-Kat Club was superseded by the Blue Stocking Club, whose name is quite as

suggestive of seriousness as the earlier name of frivolity. Our common word "bluestocking" comes to us through this club, whose members, especially in the person of a certain Mr. Benjamin Stillingfleet, perpetuated the memory of the Barebone parliament by affecting to despise the dapper airs of the dandy world about them, particularly in the matter of hose. The decadent dandies derided this studied plainness of dress and the new cult was dubbed with its tenacious name from the character of Mr. Stillingfleet's stockings. A younger Mrs. Montagu, married to a cousin of the gay Lady Mary's husband, promptly occupied the stage when the old Lady Mary disappeared, and became straightway known as "the Queen of the Blues." Around her sober tables gathered such disciples of the new *régime* as Lyttelton, Burke, Samuel Johnson, and Joshua Reynolds. Her younger associ-

ates included such serious feminine spirits as Hannah More and Frances Burney. Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, disdaining to waste her precious time on frivolous letters of travel, assailed even the sprightly Voltaire with a heavy "Essay on Shakspeare." She and her associates, the veritable Methodists of literature, accepted the derisive name of their light foes, and so rightly did they attune their spirits to the changed key of the incoming age that the nineteenth century may well be called, in token of their keen if somewhat pedantic discernment, the Bluestocking Century. Robert Burns it was who, a poet-prophet, living in the eighteenth century, but belonging to the nineteenth—Robert Burns foresaw the approaching change in its deepest and noblest aspects, giving expression to the Sartor Resartus idea in those manly, ringing lines that may well stand

for all that is best in our bluestocking age:

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddin gray, and a' that?  
Give fools their silks and knaves their wine,  
A man's a man for a' that;  
For a' that, an a' that,  
Their tinsel show, and a' that;  
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,  
Is king o' men for a' that.

A hundred years ago to-day the horizon of English literature was bright with promise. The mild glories of the Lake School, including Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, were already apparent. Three boys were then living—Byron, Shelley, and Keats—whose influence was to give to nineteenth century poetry its most distinctive formal characteristics. Across the sea a precocious lad was shortly to write a remarkable poem which should stand as a type of a young and precocious development in English litera-

ture that must hereafter compel the subdivisions "British" and "American." Walter Scott was just rising into fame, and the American youth was living who should describe the romance of our own pioneer life with Scott as his living model. Hallam was preparing to devote himself to history, Milman and Grote and Prescott were lively lads, Macaulay and George Bancroft were infants. Lamb and Landor and De Quincey were polishing their styles to perfection in secret, while Washington Irving was about to become the first American writer of wide distinction. Carlyle was a child in Dumfriesshire; his spiritual kinsman, Emerson, was born in 1803 in Boston; and Hawthorne in the year succeeding.

But the year 1809 was to be the red-letter year of the century. Over in England, all within that darling twelvemonth of the natal gods, were to be born the

greatest scientist, the greatest statesman, the greatest poet, the greatest poetess, and the greatest poetical translator that the lavish century bestowed on Anglo-Saxon peoples—Darwin, Gladstone, Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett\* (Browning), and the marvellous Edward Fitzgerald. America was scarcely less favored; for that same bright year bequeathed to us our most brilliant poet, Poe; our most popular man-of-letters, Holmes; and a statesman to whom impartial history will yet assign a station greater than Gladstone's, and even a place in American literature as the master of strenuous Shakespearean prose. Longfellow and Whittier were born two years before. Thus early in the century had been mustered, for the most part, those creative and critical forces that were destined to glorify the Victorian era with a splendor only less bright than the spa-

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\* Some chronologies give 1806.

cious golden days of Good Queen Bess. A dozen years later and the roll of the real immortals was complete, if we except a few brilliant names that belong rather to the new century than to the old. Browning in poetry, Thackeray and Dickens and George Eliot in fiction, Ruskin and Arnold and Lowell in essay—add these to the catalogue already cited, and you have the two-score largest names in nineteenth century English literature, and the century but a score of years old.

The century in English literature has been marked by three distinguishing elemental features—a wide possession of facts, an earnest hunger for truth, and a profound resulting sadness. Let us briefly inquire as to what this means.

The century opened in a whirlwind of revolution. It was the time of a new Renaissance; a time only to be compared with the wonderful revival of thought that

followed the downfall of Constantinople in 1453. Rousseau's "Contrat Social," and the "Doctrine of the Rights of Man," formulated by Rousseau's disciples, were the Turks that took France. And the downfall of the French Empire liberated quite as many forces throughout Europe as had escaped through the gates of the Golden Horn. That vast complex movement, known as the French Revolution, proved to be one of the greatest stimulants that ever quickened the mind of man,—by no means altogether wholesome, let us say, yet none the less mighty for that. Second only to the impetus of the French Revolution was the influence of a single German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. His "Critique of Pure Reason" has shaped the spirit of the age to an extent that cannot be estimated. The mind of the world suddenly seized hold of the magical key of law,—a key to unlock all

riddles. Chaotic nature was quickly reduced to order, and natural laws patiently traced to their sources yielded veritable Golcondas of facts. Marvellous inventions and discoveries sprang into existence from nowhere. The mind of the world has had a solemn, wide sweep of sheer facts. It is as though a seeker in the dark for rare gems had been suddenly set down amid glittering acres of diamonds,—such is the contrast between the opulence of nineteenth century enlightenment and the poverty of the ages just preceding. Naturally, humanity was dazzled and blinded. Old facts seemed unreal or incomparably mean when seen by the side of the new. Moreover, it was felt that the old foundations of facts were faulty and that truth must be searched for anew. In other words, science revolutionized philosophy, overturning inadequate theories with its deluge of irresistible facts,

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and men were swept from their precious footholds by a rising flood of materialism. Some of them asked the flippant, bitter question, "What is truth?" and were content to float with the tide, careless of aim or of anchorage. But be it said to the everlasting glory of this turbulent age that the great majority of its thoughtful scholars have quested eagerly to set their feet upon the rock of truth beneath the sea of facts, not content to lose faith in the spiritual because they had found such wide knowledge of the material. Quite unlike the century preceding, it has never for a moment been satisfied with "the shows of things." With all of its manifold tools and talents it probed searchingly down through the understood rind of the world towards the deep hidden heart where the truth is. Note how the literary stream of the century shunted off from its strenuous current those bubbles

and small surface movements that murmured of "art for art's sake." The English literary art of the age has been profoundly concerned with a motive, a deep soul-hunger for truth. The mind has reached out in a wide possession of facts, but the will has driven it onward into a dim and shadowy sphere, where one believes, although he cannot see, that those things dwell which are eternal. This characteristic double chord of patent fact and latent truth is sounded with majestic resonance in those rare verses that are too little known:

The centre fire heaves underneath the earth,  
And the earth changes like a human face;  
The molten ore bursts up among the rocks,  
Winds into the stone's heart, outbranches bright  
In hidden mines, spots barren river beds,  
Crumbles into fine sand where sunbeams bask—  
God joys therein. The wroth sea's waves are  
    edged  
With foam, white as the bitter lip of hate,

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When, in the solitary waste, strange groups  
Of young volcanoes come up, Cyclops-like,  
Staring together with their eyes on flame—  
God tastes a pleasure in their uncouth pride.  
Then all is still; earth is a wintry clod;  
But spring-wind, like a dancing psaltress, passes  
Over its breast to waken it, rare verdure  
Buds tenderly upon rough banks, between  
The withered tree-roots and the cracks of frost,  
Like a smile striving with a wrinkled face;  
The grass grows bright, the boughs are swollen  
    with blooms  
Like chrysalids impatient for the air;  
The shining dorrs are busy, beetles run  
Along the furrows, ants make their ado;  
Above, birds fly in merry flocks, the lark  
Soars up and up, shivering for very joy;  
Afar the ocean sleeps; white fishing gulls  
Flit where the strand is purple with its tribe  
Of nested limpets; savage creatures seek  
Their loves in wood and plain, and God renews  
His ancient rapture.

I have quoted this eloquent passage not only because of its aptness to denote the clinging faith in the vague unseen which

abides amid the multiplicity of clearly perceived material facts, but also because of its pervasive sadness. The poem illustrates all three of the dominant elements of the century in English literature. The element of melancholy is often the least obtrusive, but the most thoroughly pervasive of the three. The scope of our knowledge has been so vast that it has teased and oppressed the mind. The grip of our faith has been maintained chiefly by sheer force of heart power. In a word, it has been an age of transition, and the soul is always sad when it is not at rest. The renovated home that it will eventually enter will doubtless be a far more stately mansion than the "outgrown shell" it left behind, and sadness is no doubt a good soul-medicine, but the fact remains that a time of passage is a time of travail. Gone is all that brilliant persiflage, that heartless gayety, of the century preceding.

Even our gayety is sad and forced. There were those who sought to drive themselves, fact-bewildered, into an arid desert of universal scepticism, but their mirth was hollow mockery, their laughter only an abnormal sobbing. Byron, rightly read, is one of the saddest of poets. It is as when the French Baudelaire exclaims: "One should always be drunk! That is all, the whole question. In order not to feel the horrible burden of time, which is breaking your shoulders and bearing you to earth, you must be drunk without cease, on wine, poetry, or virtue, as you choose. But get drunk!" Such terrible confessions merely betray the awful pain of the hungry heart, the intensity of a desire which has turned at last in the lassitude of dull despair from its quest.

Those others, great-souled, who yet have persevered, are also immeasurably sad. The best that the best of them can

do, with all their strength of grasp and dogged hopefulness, is just to "cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt"—to "follow The Hleam," which shifts and slips on far-off spiritual landscapes, in lieu of open sunshine near at hand. It has been an age of profound sadness, because the alert mind has opened the whole wide universe to our bewildered ken, and the hungry soul has driven persistently through these multifold dumb shows of things in a passionate thirst for the truth, which should lie beyond, only to find itself as yet in a place of large shadows, bewildered, afraid and yet hopeful—groping towards a far-off "kindly light." That is what the English literature of the nineteenth century really means, whether it be the philosophy of Spencer or the criticism of Arnold, the essay of Carlyle or the poetry of Stephen Phillips, the history of Buckle or the fiction of Mrs. Humphrey

Ward. "Never," says Paul Desjardins, "have men been more universally sad than in the present time." And one of the most eloquent of living American men of letters adds: "Never was literary art more perfect, more accomplished, more versatile and successful than in the present age. Never have its laws been more widely understood and its fascinations more potently exercised. Never has it evoked more magical and charming forms to float above an abyss of disenchantment and nothingness. A gray shadow of melancholy spreads over the questioning, uncertain, disillusioned age." \*

Attainment and the unattainable—these dominant notes of nineteenth century life produce in literature an all-per-

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\* Henry van Dyke, in "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt."

vasive minor chord, and almost any representative author may be studied for the proof thereof. But it is a woman who becomes the veritable sibyl of her age, its greatest representative writer in the strict significance of that term, because with her delicate feminine intuitions she gathered all its subtle influences within herself and then by virtue of a wonderful virile mind set them forth in an eloquent unity. Her knowledge? It ranged with the sweep of science to the farthest stars, or delved with infinite patience into the musty tomes of the past, wide, deep, and untiring. At the Sunday gatherings in her London home one might meet in a single afternoon such ruling spirits of the century as Darwin, Huxley, Clifford, Tennyson, Browning, Turgenieff, and Richard Wagner, with others. Such was the magnetic power of her sympathetic temperament, so great was her capacity for responsiveness,

that this homely woman compelled the tribute of giants, and from their store of learning she took the best they had to give. Her books are laden with instructiveness in every line. Her facts were always scientifically correct. One of the most critical of living historical scholars has called her portraiture of mediæval Florence "a picture executed with an accuracy and completeness worthy of an exact scholar," and this is characteristic, not only of "Romola," but of every book she wrote. And yet, withal, she was profoundly dissatisfied with mere facts. There was an absorbing quest for the truth in every line she penned. Her novels, while not didactic and consequently inartistic, were inevitably pervaded by a moral. Never has pen been moved to a more serious measure, or with more earnest purpose, than the pen of this woman novelist, who probed through

facts for the truth. She probed, but she did not find it. She believed it was there to the end, but it always somehow eluded her. One who knew her says that she worked with a "brave despair." Does not this precisely characterize the solemn note that sounds even through her singing? And this same friend has told us how at Cambridge he walked with her in a garden, "on an evening of rainy May; and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet calls of men, the words God, immortality, duty—pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first; how unbelievable the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing law. I listened, and night fell; her grave,

majestic countenance turned towards me like a Sibyl's in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp, one by one, the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll only, awful with inevitable fates." \*

It is as her best interpreter has said: "We must conceive her as an expression of the spirit of the age out of which she grew." He who would gain a clear and unified idea of what the nineteenth century means in the development of English literature, can on the whole find it best embodied and exemplified in the wise, earnest, sombre writings of "George Eliot." And what a contrast to Lady Mary Montagu!

Pain is symptomatic of life. The eighteenth century, with all its gayety, was insensate; the sad nineteenth century was

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\* F. W. H. Myers, *Essays*.

at least alive. No one can gainsay that. And it was growing—growing towards a larger and a fuller life. It was sad because it was a transitional age, but the transition was in the direction of the light. We who greet the twentieth century have our faces towards the sunshine, not the darkness. Our immediate forerunners made real progress in their struggles towards the light, and we are the heirs of their travail. The age that is coming, let us predict, will be no less wide in its knowledge, no less eager for wisdom, than the century just gone by, but it will be far less sad. Yet the incoming gladness will not be a mere childish joy, which has never known pain—such was the gayety of a hundred years ago; it will be rather a deep and abiding peace, that has been won at the cost of tears; it will be the full gladness of manhood. There is a peace of the idler, we might almost say of the

coward, and there is the "peace with honor" of the man who has battled and won. "Blessed is he that overcometh." The glory of the nineteenth century is the heroic glory of an Abraham, "who against hope believed in hope," laying its embodied treasure on the altar at the behest of truth, and going out into far countries of bewilderment for the sake of a future race, that all the families of the earth might eventually be called blessed, "the heirs of all the ages, in the foremost files of time." Nay, it is rather the splendid tragic glory of a Moses, leading the people out from the bondage of the idle flesh-pots, through the wilderness, to the verge of the Promised Land, whereinto the great lawgiver might not enter because a Joshua has been summoned as supplanter. And the spokesman of this Joshua has already uttered the heartening cry of the herald. Just as Robert Burns

stood at the close of the eighteenth century heralding the nineteenth, so Robert Browning lived in the nineteenth century, but was not truly of it, because this poet was also a prophet, living in advance of his age, believing that "the best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made"—bidding us bravely "trust God; see all, nor be afraid!" Tennyson was the chief poetical exponent of the present, but Browning was the prophet of the future. Tennyson had wide knowledge. He observed, and observed narrowly—"observed indeed with something akin to the trained scientific eye." Profoundly earnest was he also in his quest for truth, as all his lovers know. But unutterably sad! One can see that he held to his creed of optimism only through sheer force of will power; even his optimism is sombre. His was "the field of that vague, wordless autumnal sadness that seems to have

its source in a secret sympathy with some hidden sorrow lying deep in the heart of nature." Therefore he has been recognized as the greatest poet of his century, not only because of his supreme mastery of form, and other far greater qualities, but also because he was so utterly its mouthpiece. His words speed straight to the mark, they find immediate responsiveness, they are seized upon and assimilated without effort. Browning's great message, however, overreaches us and eludes us, but we feel that the fault is not with him, it is with us—that he is speaking a truth so large and free that we have not yet grown quite great enough to grasp it. As one has most admirably said: "Tennyson clove the mark at which he aimed, but Browning's arrow, like that of the archer of ancient story, sped in an arc of light, beyond the ken of the gazers,

to be lost in the overarching heaven." \*  
Nay, not lost, but harbored for a heaven-  
lier race. With Browning there is all the  
wonderful wide scope of his contempora-  
ries, and all of their deep, earnest quest,  
but of sadness never a whit. Because he  
had somehow found! He drank from  
the true "chalice of the grapes of God,"  
he saw the Grail unveiled. Therefore he  
stands, true herald of the dawn, with his  
mystical, matchless song—

The year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hill-side's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world!

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\* Dixon, "A Tennyson Primer."

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